CONCERNING THE BALTIC PROBLEM

ESTONIA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

ESTONIA

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The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic occupies an area of 45, 200 square kilometres and has a population of 1.4 million. The capital of Estonia is Tallinn (formerly Reval). Until 1917, Estonia was a part *(gubernia)* of tsarist Russia. From 1918 to 1940 Estonia was a republic, dependent upon the Western powers. Since June 21 th, 1940 Estonia is a Soviet Socialist Republic which joined the Soviet Union on August 6 th, 1940.

This book is a brief account of some political developments that played an important enough part in the people's life during two decades of the present century. The period examined here starts with the close of the First World War and ends with the beginning of the Second World War.

During our century, the peoples of the Baltic countries have endured two German invasions. But the period this book is dealing with also includes the forming of Soviet statehood in Estonia, its defeat because of the interference of foreign powers, the twenty years existence of the bourgeois Estonian Republic and the restoration of Soviet power in 1940. The historical data enable us to draw parallels

between the international policies of the past and present, and are of great interest in the question of relations between national problems and politics.

It must be pointed out that the present book is different from all the publications on Baltic history, since here use has been made of British and American sources, including the U. S. A. Congress documents on foreign policy. For various subjective reasons they have not been used in the historical surveys published by Estonian emigrants. But it is those materials that provide us with a concrete background for the so-called "Baltic question" at the present moment.

In this book the publications of well-known Estonian historians P. Vihalem, Professor of Public Law at Tartu State University, M. Pesti and H. Arumäe, research-workers of the History Department of the Academy of Sciences of the Estonian S. S. R. and A. Koop, Rector of Tartu University, have been used.

THE DECISIVE YEAR

THE PRESENT historic survey begins with the year 1917.

Looking for the key to the understanding of everything that took place in the life of the Baltic peoples during several decades of our century, historians have time and again resorted to the "grand policy" of Europe. It is true that it would be very difficult to explain the dramatic developments of this area without knowing the stimuli of that policy. Those were the years when the Baltic countries frequently became the subject of the intent attention of Western diplomacy.

Of course, there had to be special reasons for it. And a historian wishing to evaluate those developments here must keep the documents of diplomacy near at hand.

But let us start with the year of 1917 and see what it brought to Europe.

It was the third year of World War I. The bloodshed that had already lasted for about 900 days had reached the point where main emphasis fell on the socio-political situation instead of the military one. The majority of the ten million victims of the World War had already been buried. At the frontline, which ran for thousands of kilometres in length, armies that had run short of blood and patriotism, were facing each other. There were indeed about 30 million more of potential victims in the trenches, as yet. But the

World War I (1914-1918) lasted for 4 years, 3 months, and 13 days.

The aim of the war was the re-division of colonies and spheres of influence between the major powers of the Entente.

33 countries with a total population of 1.5 milliard took part in the war.

Russia and Germany waged war in the Baltic area.

The monarchy is overthrown.

In Estonia the workers of Tallinn and the revolutionary army overthrew the tsarist imperial power.

On March 16, the power went into the hands of the Soviets of the Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

nations already considered the war senseless. The general staffs were planning new attacks, but the main problem of the governments was to hold the hungry masses of people in check.

And then the first staggering explosion took place: on March 12, 1917, the people's revolution broke out in Russia. One of Europe's three monarchs, Nicholas II, was deprived of his emperor's throne.

Only a few hundred kilometres separated Estonia from the Russian capital Petrograd. Everything that happened in the revolutionary capital found reflection in Estonia. And at the same time the war had reached the gates of Estonia.

The Baltic front.

The frontline of the First World War had approached the Baltic countries almost unnoticeably. Already in 1915, Germany had broken through the Russian front. The army of Kaiser Wilhelm was marching into Poland, Lithuania, Courland. At the end of 1917, the front divided the Baltic area into two parts, and in the headquarters of Field Marshal Hindenburg the fate of Estonia had been determined. The whole of the Baltic area was to be linked to the German "Vaterland", and this time for good. After that the German army was to march on to the "plains of Sarmatia".

Germany's militarist plans in the East were to conquer Poland, the Baltic area and the Ukraine and to invade the Caucasus.

But the Estonian people had known these "civilized" invaders for 700 years already. And they had experienced, throughout centuries, that campaigns against Russia always passed through their country.

Estonia as a part of the Russian Empire.

For the past two centuries Estonia had been an integral part of the Russian Empire. It goes without saying that being subjected to the Russian monarchy did not bring the people of the country any political or national rights. Having conquered the province of Estonia from Sweden at the beginning of the 18th century, the Russian monarchy corroborated

all the privileges of the local aristocracy — the offspring of the German invaders. That meant the continuing power of the German feudal barons over the Estonian people, and that power was nothing else than cruel national oppression.

Nevertheless, there was a basic difference when compared with the times of the past. At that time, the Russian Empire was a state rapidly gaining in power, and it needed the Baltic provinces for the developing trade with the Western countries. At the same time, the Empire was powerful enough to guarantee two hundred years of peace to those areas. It was the end of the constant warfare that had threatened the Estonian people with extinction. And, besides, in the existence and development of the people, although suppressed and rightless, it made a great difference whether Estonia was used as an arena for campaigns against Russia by Germany, Sweden or Poland, or as an industrial and commercial borderland for maintaining Russia's relations with Western Europe.

Already in the earlier periods of history Estonians and Russians had fought side by side against the Germans and other invaders from the West. Without idealizing these relations: all the foreign conquests, including the Russian ones, had brought only suffering to the people; however, it is also true that the Estonians had always expected and received help from the Russian people. During the Estonian national movement in the 19th century, the point of which was directed at the German aristocracy, the only help came from the democratic circles of Russia.

At the end of this excursion into the earlier history, it should be pointed out that after ceaseless wars there had been about 100,000 people (together with the foreign warriors and the people brought to work on

Two hundred years of peaceful development.

Some crucial points in the social development:
In 1816-1819 the Estonian peasant was liberated from serfdom, ceasing to be personal property of the landlord.
In 1820, the industrial revolution began.
In 1905, the people's revolution under the leadership of the proletariat broke out.

History of the collaboration between Estonia and Russia: military union against the German invaders (in the 13th century).

Russian democrats support the Estonian national movement against the Baltic-German aristocracy (19th century).

Russian and Estonian workers struggle shoulder to shoulder against the monarchy (beginning of the 20th century).

the estates from neighbouring districts) left on Estonian territory in the 17th century. During the Russian-Swedish war the number of the population was considerably reduced, but already by the middle of the 18th century it had increased to 400,000, and this figure was doubled within a century. At the time of the events discussed in our survey there were about 900,000 Estonians in their native land (200,000 had emigrated to Russia).

The political situation in the province. The Province of Estonia — the rear of revolutionary Petrograd.

Let us now turn back to the events of 1917.

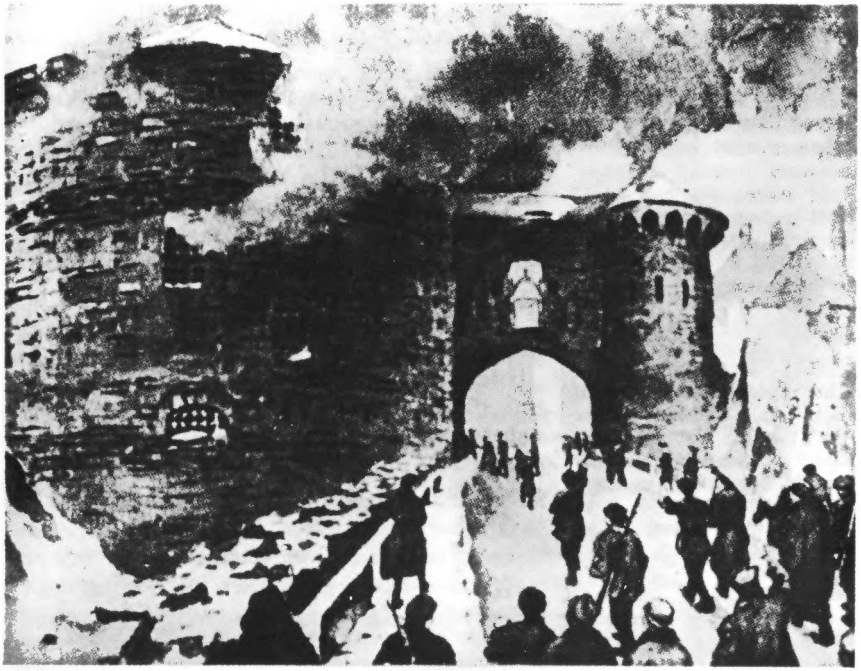
All the historians who have studied that period have pointed out two important factors that influenced the events in Estonia: the World War and the revolution.

About 100,000 Estonians had already been mobilized in the Russian army. About 40,000 of them were killed during the war. Almost every family was desperate and in mourning. When the revolution broke out in Petrograd, the tsarist regime was immediately overthrown in Estonia, as well. Here, in the nearest vicinity of the frontline, many troops were stationed — about 200,000 soldiers, the majority of whom joined the revolution on its very first day. This fact, and the existence of a numerous and experienced working class of industrially advanced Estonia made the country one of the most active centres of the revolution, next to Petrograd.

Another important factor that was to play an essential role in the future became apparent at that time — the splitting of Estonian society into two antagonistic groups.

The population of Estonia in 1917: out of the total 950,000 population, there were 200,000 of urban proletariat, 370,000 of rural proletariat (poor peasants and farm-labourers), 22,000 of urban and 120,000 of rural bourgeoisie.

Like every other class society, that of Estonia had never been homogeneous before, either. The bourgeois circles had been loyal to the tsarist government, supporting its policy and using its protection from the working class. They were even ready to make agreements with the German aristocracy. The



The Bastille of Tallinn — the bastion tower "Stout Margaret", which was used as a prison. In the revolution of 1917 the people took it by force. After a painting by Maksolly.

Estonian bourgeoisie strove for participation in the rule of the country not by struggling for democracy, but by playing up to the most reactionary circles. And when the First World War broke out, they swore to fight for "the Russian tsar, the Russian religion and the Russian land".

It goes without saying that those were the workers and peasants who were sent to die on the front, and not those who were in favour of the continuation of the war.

The standpoints of the workers and peasants were totally different: to put an end to the war, to establish a democratic society, to grant political rights to the whole population, to divide the baronial lands among the landless peasants and the poor.

The developments in Russia in 1917.

Dual power in the country.

Revolutionary developments cannot be stopped.

Thus — peace, freedom and land! But these demands were the slogans of the Russian revolution, as well.

Here the unsurpassable gap between the Estonian bourgeoisie and the working-people became evident. Their paths diverged: the former supported the Russian reaction, and later joined the foreign invaders, whereas the latter, the majority of the people, joined the revolution, fighting and making sacrifices.

What then was the situation like after the overthrowal of the monarchy?

Historians emphasize, first of all, the following. The Russian financial and industrial bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy formed a Provisional Government to replace the monarchy. But since the first day of the Feb-

The revolutionary year of 1917 in Tallinn. After the tsarist police-regime had been liquidated, people began to use their democratic rights — to declare their views — in the streets.

ruary revolution there existed Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies elected at factories and in the army. These Soviets were and remained the power organs of the revolutionary people. In Tallinn, the capital of the Estonian Province, the Russian Provisional Government was represented by the first Estonian governor (province commissar Jaan Poska) who was assisted by a Provisional Land Committee. With that the bourgeois circles considered their goals achieved and called upon the people to subject to the Russian bourgeois government. For the future a republic was promised... in case the would-be Constituent Assembly decided in its favour! In the ranks of the revolutionary people quite another goal was set: all power to the Soviets of workers and soldiers. And when the Provisional Government declared its wish to do its duty by the military allies Great Britain and France — i. e. to continue the war, the revolution answered with the proclamation: war against war!

The Provisional Land Committee of the Estonian Province was formed according to the law adopted by the Russian Provisional Government which had 62 members and was active between July and November 1917 and from November 1918 until April 1919, pretending to be a body of people's representatives.

Something quite unprecedented in earlier history was happening in Russia. The development of the revolution had reached the borderline of mankind's experience. There had been many revolutions in history, but the well-to-do classes had come to power again in the end. Now mankind was facing a situation where the power was about to pass over to the lowest strata of social hierarchy — to the working class. It had happened only once before — during the days of the Paris Commune in the preceding century, but the revolution had been drowned in blood in a very short time.

The reaction expected the same to happen to the Russian revolution.

The duties of Russia to Great Britain and France had equalled 18 million mobilized soldiers. For this cannon-fodder Russia had re-

Russia and the Entente. In July, 1917, the Russian army was defeated by the Austrian-German troops.

The people demanded that the government put an end to the war.

ceived foreign credit to carry on the war, and capital investments in the war industry. And now the allies demanded that Russia should fulfil its commitments. The Romanov dynasty could be replaced by a republic or some other power, but the war was to be continued by all means. The people who did not agree were to be forced to obey — if necessary, with the help of cannons and machine-guns. This method had already been used to establish "peace and order" in the past.

Tallinn's working people say: "No to the imperialist war", "No to the bourgeois national parliament", "All power to the Soviets".

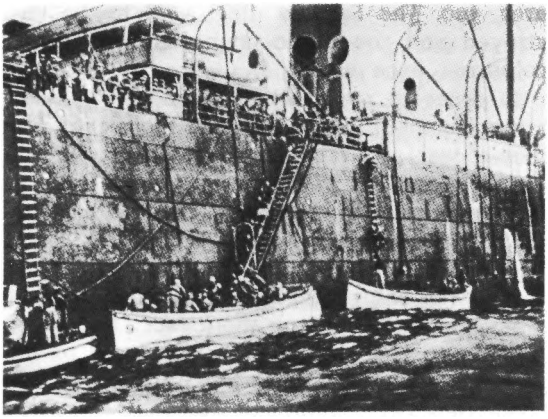
The Western allies and the Russian reaction represented, above all, by military leaders decided to put an end to the revolution. The first attempt was made in July 1917. In the streets of Petrograd revolutionary workers were killed. In Estonia the popular workers' leaders were arrested and the editorial offices of workers' papers were ravaged. In order to undermine the influence of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Estonian bourgeoisie tried to convene a "national parliament". 40,000 workers of Tallinn surrounded the self-styled assembly, and it broke up without achieving its goal.

Generals conspire against the revolution.
Estonian bourgeois parties support the generals' plot.

Workers' Soviets defended the revolution by not letting the generals on to Petrograd.

On August 30, 1917, the Workers' Red Guard was formed in Tallinn.

In August and September, 1917, a plan was launched, according to which Chief Commander of the Russian army General Kornilov was to march into Petrograd and make himself the military dictator of Russia. Hoping to make use of Imperial Germany in their plans, the general staff of Russia gave up Riga. Riga, like Tallinn, was one of the strongest centres of revolution in the Baltic countries. At the order of the Commander in Chief, the front was deliberately weakened here. The aim of that action was to strengthen Germany's position in the Baltic area and, in case of need, enable it to assist in suppressing the Russian revolution.



September 1917. The 25,000-strong German landing forces arrive on Estonian islands. The photo was published in the Berlin press.

Actually the so-called generals' plot collapsed at its very beginning, and Kornilov never reached Petrograd. The Estonian Soviets of Workers and Soldiers detained some divisions that were to support the coup d'état in Petrograd. These days were stormy in the Baltic countries. But nobody was able to save Riga, and on August, 21, the town was occupied by the army of imperial Germany. Without delay, the latter started to prepare for new operations. Their next goal was to occupy the Estonian islands and after that the whole territory of Estonia, which would have given them an opportunity to attack revolutionary Petrograd.

Thus the final goals of the Russian monarchists and the army command of imperial Germany were identical. The German army command also wanted to suppress the revolution in Petrograd and to restore monarchy in Russia. A little later, the Russian monarchists and the German occupation army command started to collaborate directly. Germany had certainly personal interests in this

Troops of Imperial Germany invade Estonian territory.

The English Navy in the role of an onlooker.

The plans of the German military troops in the Baltic countries: to occupy the mainland of Estonia and destroy the Russian fleet on the Baltic Sea.

area, too. The Russian fleet was to be destroyed and the Baltic countries were to be colonized once again.

In order to realize their plans, the German army command had assembled more than 320 men-of-war and auxiliary vessels, over 100 aircraft and a 25,000-strong landing force. At dawn on September 29, the conquest of the Estonian islands was begun. Riga had been sold to the Germans; now a new betrayal was being prepared. The Russian army command fled. But one more fact had to be taken into consideration — very near to the planned landing-place of the Germans, at the roadsteads of Tallinn and Helsinki (Finland), British men-of-war were placed. They, however, did not weigh anchor in order to force the Germans to receive the battle. A year and two months later a squadron of the British fleet was sent to the Baltic Sea again, but this time to fight against Soviet Russia. By that time the German forces situated in the Baltic countries had concluded peace with the Entente.

A. Kerensky, Prime Minister of the Russian Provisional Government, who hoped to suppress the revolution with the help of German troops. Dressed as a woman, he fled from Petrograd. A. Kerensky died in the U. S. A. in 1970.

Already in the early autumn of 1917 such developments could be foreseen. It could be noticed that the international reaction was greatly interested in the Estonian area. A glance at the map will make it clear even to a layman that this area was the most suitable arena for a campaign against Petrograd.

So the conquest of the Estonian islands by Germany represented a serious danger not only to Estonia but to revolutionary Russia as well.

The revolutionary forces of Russia foresaw the danger and took resolute measures. The most important of these was to overthrow the Russian Provisional Government and give all power to the Soviets of Workers and Soldiers, and this was done by the Great October Revolution. On November 7, 1917,

the Russian Provisional Government headed by A. Kerensky fell, and all the power went to the revolutionary Soviets. Let us point out that in Tallinn, the capital of the Province of Estonia, the same had already happened two days earlier, and from here revolutionary forces were sent to Petrograd to support the revolution.

On November 10, 1917, Jaan Poska, the former provincial commissar of the Russian Provisional Government, handed his duties over to the new power.

Such were the events in Estonia in 1917. The chain reaction had been released by the First World War, causing a revolutionary explosion in Russia. In November the Estonian sky was covered with threatening clouds — the German occupation forces were situated in the nearest vicinity, and there were circles that expected their invasion in the continental part of Estonia.

Nevertheless, the people had another four months for starting significant changes, thanks to the victory of the first Socialist Revolution. The greatest of these was the forming of Estonian statehood in the form of a Soviet republic.

Socialist revolution.

On November 10, it was proclaimed that the revolutionary Soviet power would support peaceful politics, confiscate the land of the aristocracy in order to give it to the people and take special measures to organize the economic life of the country.

WHO WANTED SELF-DETERMINATION AND WHO DID NOT

The national programme of the Russian communists.

On November 16, 1917, the Soviet Government issued the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia.

It proclaimed the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia; the right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination; the abolition of any and all national and national-religious privileges; the free development of national minorities.

AS WE KNOW, no national Estonian state had existed up to that time. The Estonian nation had developed historically and was on a high cultural level for its time, although subjected to foreign yoke. In pre-historic times the social development had not yet brought about an integral state. In the Baltic countries, only the Lithuanians had got that far. After the German crusaders' conquest of Estonia in the 13th century, German bishops and commanders of the Teutonic Order, kings of Denmark, Poland and Sweden, and, since the beginning of the 18th century, Russian emperors had been the masters here. And now, for the first time in their history, the Estonians had an opportunity to establish their own statehood.

The Soviet decree on peoples' rights in Russia to political self-determination and on the right of the different nations to secede and form their own states had created quite a new situation. The standpoint of the Russian Communist Party was that denying the peoples such a right and avoiding to put it into practice would mean a policy of usurpation or annexation.

During the four months following the Socialist Revolution very much was done in Estonia to establish a Soviet republic.

At the time of these events nobody, not even the Estonian bourgeois circles, denied that the victory of the Socialist Revolution

in Russia had enabled the Estonians to establish their own statehood.

Bourgeois leaders comment upon the possibility of political self-determination.

The leader of the Estonian Democratic Party of that time wrote in 1917:

"As far as we can see, the extreme wing of the Russian revolutionary democracy, coming to power now, is in favour of the political self-determination of the nations."

Several representatives of the Estonian bourgeois circles who later were at the top of the government of the Estonian Republic, expressed the same view. The later Minister for Foreign Affairs A. Piip wrote:

"It was only the proletarian October revolution that brought self-determination to the peoples of Russia. Its logical consequence was the right of secession from Russia."

The later Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian Army J. Laidoner acknowledged that the bolsheviks were the most valiant defenders of the peoples' right to self-determination. It is known that in January the representative of the Estonian bourgeoisie (J. Seljamaa) was officially told in the Russian Peoples' Commissariat for National Affairs: "The Soviet Central Government considers it natural for the people of Estonia to support their independence through their organs."

On November 17, 1917, the leaders of the Estonian Provisional Land Committee stated that it would not be advisable to demand sovereignty for Estonia; they would be loyal to the monarchist "Russian Salvation Committee" whose aim was to overthrow Soviet power in Russia.

However, the same circles whose representatives were quoted above, were not for self-determination on the basis of a Soviet statehood since the latter was quite incompatible with the interests of the bourgeoisie.

The process of the Estonian people's political self-determination was revealed not by the way of publishing declarations, but in the practical activities of the people. The most popular form of these activities was the expropriation of the Baltic-German baronial estates that passed into the hands of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. All in all, over 1,000 estates were to be confiscated and thus

Self-determination and the political activities of the people.

On November 12, 1917, the 8-hour working-day was established in Estonia for the first time.

On December 7, the estates of the big landlords were proclaimed to belong to the people. The Baltic-German class councils were dissolved.

the centuries-long domination of the German landlords was to be crushed. But this was one of the political developments not favoured by the bourgeois circles. All their political parties had promised "to change the agrarian situation", but they were not for the expropriation of the landlords' estates free of charge; neither did they wish to liquidate the role the Baltic-German aristocracy had played. Antagonism grew in the towns as well, when the workers established control over factories and plants. Let us recall the fact that about 50 per cent of the Estonian industrial capital belonged to foreigners, among whom Germans were in the majority.

These activities alone that brought hundreds of thousands of working people to the arena of active politics, undermined the role of the bourgeois circles in the political life of the country. They felt that they were losing their foothold. Differently from the pre-revolutionary provincial authorities, the present organ in power in Estonia — the Executive Committee of the Estonian Soviet — started to solve all local problems independently. The same happened in national policy. For the first time in history, Estonian became the official language in government offices as well as in court. The legislative documents were published in the Estonian language, as well. Every governmental official had to know Estonian, the only exception being made concerning specialists. Tuition at schools proceeded in the native language of the pupils. Estonians were placed at the head of all the governmental offices. Estonian communist Jaan Anvelt, a lawyer and writer, became Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Estonian Soviet.

At the turn of 1917/1918, there were ca 10,000 Communists in Estonia. At the elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly the Communist Party got 120,000 votes (41 per cent). The other parties with socialist programs got 20 per cent of the votes.

Laying the foundations to Estonia's Soviet statehood.

These changes that nowadays seem so matter-of-course meant a great victory of the people at that time.

During these months the isolation of the bourgeois circles from the people and their impotence in independent policy became evident. However, it did not mean the capitulation of these circles to the will of the people. Their political impotence was a serious danger to the interests of the wide masses of the people.

What were the "national standpoints" of the Estonian bourgeois parties in the summer of 1917? National independence was not considered as important as the union with Russia in order to retain the advantageous market there. In the voluminous "History of Estonian People" published in the thirties we can read that in 1917 "the demands of all the Estonian national parties did not even aspire to national autonomy yet, but covered provincial autonomy with the priority of the central power. The resolution of K. Päts (a leader of the right wing, the later Head of the State with aspirations to dictatorship. — Editor's note) at the first Estonian Servicemen's Congress in Tallinn was characteristic of the situation: the determination of relations between the Estonian State and the central government was left to the Constituent Assembly of Russia, i. e. for the central government."

The bourgeois parties were against national autonomy. In November 1917, these parties declared that Soviet power in Russia would not survive and would collapse in a month. The Estonian bourgeoisie believed in the possibility of restoring the Russian Empire.

By and by some bourgeois leaders started to support the idea of a federal, but yet not an independent state.

Such a "national policy" was deeply traditional in these circles. During the tsarist regime people had been admonished to obey the government, to respect "the Russian native land, religion and tsar". Odd things occurred: after Nicholas II was dethroned in March 1917, the Estonian bourgeois circles gave an oath of allegiance to . . . the new tsar! But the latter did never exist. Further, they put up with the Provisional Government, but with great caution at first. And when the Provision-

US professor M. W. Graham, after a study of the developments in the Baltic area, wrote that the Estonian nationalist circles presented no emancipation program for the self-determination of the nation. See: The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States, Part II, Estonia, Berkeley, 1939.

al Government had handed the reins of the provincial government over to the bourgeois parties, it became apparent that they had no definite national program to present to the people. When the minister of the Provisional Government A. Kerensky (later the melodramatic prime minister) visited Tallinn, he was carried to the meeting-hall on the shoulders of the local elite. At the same time the first Estonian (to tell the truth — a Russianized one, like most of the Estonian bourgeoisie's leaders) head of the provincial government Jaan (Ivan) Poska had banned Estonian as the official language. This ban was not followed, however, by the local administrations headed by Communists.

It goes without saying that when the bourgeois leaders denied the equality of the national language they were even less interested in self-determination. At the all-Estonian conference of national organizations it was decided not to take the pursuit of autonomy into the agenda. The leader of the Democratic party Jaan Tõnisson sent a message to the Russian Provisional Government in which the wish to coexist with Russia was declared. On behalf of "the Estonian League" (it was a union of several organizations), Labour leader Otto Strandmann took the floor saying that nobody in Estonia wanted secession from Russia. The above-mentioned K. Päts called upon the servicemen to obey the Provisional Government and continue the war for Russia. Eight months later that politician made friends with the German occupation authorities.

The standpoints of the Estonian parties on the problem of self-determination in 1917:
the Democratic Party — autonomy of the province;
the Peasants' League — autonomy of the province;
the Social-Democratic Labour Party — autonomy and federation with Russia;
the Communists — a Soviet republic.

By the way, the other bourgeois politicians shared these views. One of their leaders, Jüri Vilms, emphasized repeatedly that the Estonian people and country did not need independence and that nobody had demanded it: "The defence and other needs of an independent state would entail great difficulties

whereas economically Estonia belongs to Russia . . ."

Looking for the reasons for the political impotence of the bourgeois parties, two factors are primary — their aim was neither a radical democratization of the society nor putting an end to the national oppression, the aims pursued by the people. Such alienation had actually begun long ago. In their political goals, the bourgeois leaders had never looked for the people's support, but always used backstage contacts and deals. So they had tried to make a deal with the Baltic-German aristocracy to let the wealthier Estonian farmers and factory-owners take part in the German Diet on the basis of parity. In 1917 they were quite satisfied with the reactionary electoral law, according to which it became possible to form a Provisional Land Committee that did not represent the people. Having in this way achieved the long-desired "provincial parliament", they rejected the new democratic elections.

The Provisional Land Committee.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Greene, head of the US military mission in the Baltic area in 1919, wrote in his report No. 1, concerning Estonia, that the Estonian Land Committee had not been elected on the basis of general suffrage and, therefore, could not represent the people.

Being far from the people's democratic aspirations, the Estonian bourgeois circles had no further national goals before the Russian socialist revolution. All the authors who have studied that period in Estonian history agree on the point that the idea of an independent Estonian state was unknown here up to the time of the socialist revolution.

The bourgeois circles' faithfulness to the Russian Provisional Government was not due to economic speculations only, but also to the existence of a relatively powerful Estonian working class, whom it would have been difficult to rule without the help from the central power of Russia. Therefore it is understandable why the bourgeois parties did not present any suggestions concerning the establishment of an independent state even immediately after the Russian socialist revolution

On November 25, 1917, the Executive Committee of the Estonian Soviet announced that the mandate of the Provisional Land Committee had expired, since the power of the Russian Provisional Government was no longer valid in Estonia.

in November 1917, when the power passed into the hands of the Soviets. Being too weak to change the situation with their own forces, the only alternative for them, at that time — as it was with the anti-revolutionary groupings elsewhere in the world — was the hope of the collapse of Soviet power.

The bourgeois parties tried to organize a public demonstration against the people's power, declaring that they did not acknowledge Soviet power. Three weeks after the victory of the socialist revolution (on November 28) the members of the former Provisional Land Committee were secretly convened. Some days earlier that institution had been liquidated since the provincial office, to whom the committee had been attached, had ceased to exist. Nevertheless, the representatives of the bourgeois parties drew up a resolution, according to which the orders, decrees and regulations were not valid unless promulgated by the Land Committee.

Circles opposed to national sovereignty advocate a revolt against the people's power.

This meant nothing else than a rebellion against the people's power by a score of party leaders who had formerly been at the steering-wheel of the province. A day earlier the members of the Land Committee had discussed seizing power with the help of national troops. In a heated discussion it had become clear, however, that these troops were supporting the Workers' Soviets and would not take up arms against the people. The plan for the rebellion was still-born.

These attempts at opposition could not stop the developments. Now the establishment of the Estonian Soviet Republic became vital. At the end of 1917, the government of Soviet Russia recognized the independence of Finland. On January 13, 1918, the leader of the Soviet Government V. I. Lenin advised the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Estonian Soviet J. Anvelt, to proclaim Estonia's

V. I. Lenin, head of the Russian Soviet Government, suggests that Estonia be proclaimed an independent Soviet republic.

independence and secession from Russia. At first the Estonian Communists did not consider this problem to be of primary importance as above all they were keeping the defence of the state in mind. Soon, however, it became apparent that it was necessary to establish an independent republic in federal relations with Soviet Russia. On February 1, 1918, the draft constitution of the Estonian Soviet Republic was published.

Thus the Estonian people had begun to establish their own national Soviet state. It was to be proclaimed in the Estonian Constituent Assembly which was to convene on February 15, 1918. After that the draft constitution was to be presented for a referendum.

The constitution of the Estonian Soviet Republic was worked out. The constitution proclaimed the sovereignty of the people in building up their state.

But by that time the situation in Estonia had changed due to foreign intervention, in which the bourgeois circles did not play a respectable part at all.

CONFUSION CONCERNING THE BIRTHDAY

Professor M. W. Graham from California University stated that the German authorities made a proposal to the members of the dissolved Land Committee to proclaim Estonia's secession from Russia and to place the country under German protection. See: M. W. Graham, New Governments of Eastern Europe.

THE POLITICAL situation that had arisen by the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 left no doubt that the official formation of Soviet statehood in Estonia was a matter of the nearest future. It was equally clear that this event would put an end to the bourgeoisie's hopes for hegemony. And only now, having lost the support of the former central power of Russia, did the bourgeois parties take a course towards a secession of Estonia from Russia. Since their political position was very weak, they began to look for a new ally to lean upon in a military intervention against Soviet power. They realized that the spontaneous collapse of Soviet power expected by them was becoming more and more unlikely.

The military power that was most certain to be of assistance was close at hand.

Professor Jüri Uluots, one of the future fascist ideologists in Estonia, described the situation as follows: "A part of the population tended to support a rapprochement with Germany whose victorious military forces were already reaching out for the West-Estonian Archipelago. At the same time another part of the population favoured Russia, having good hopes for its gradually strengthening revolutionary power."

Foreign sources, above all American ones, assert that the Estonian bourgeois parties were about to contact the appropriate authorities in

imperialist Germany already at the end of 1917.

The collection of documents "Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States" published in Washington includes a letter sent from Petrograd by English diplomat Lindley to Britain's Foreign Secretary A. J. Balfour. In the letter Lindley mentions a visit paid to him on January 23, 1918, by Estonian deputies to the Russian Constituent Assembly J. Vilms, J. Poska (former province commissar) and J. Seljamaa, who informed him of an offer of independence made to Estonia by the German Government on the condition that the former accept German protectorate. J. Poska declared that if the tsarist regime were re-established, they would "prefer the regime of the German protectorate". In the same letter Lindley expressed his standpoint regarding Estonia: "... it seems desirable that Russia should get them (the Baltic provinces) back if possible."

The same US collection of official documents publishes, on pages 816—817, a letter by Francis, the US Ambassador in Petrograd, describing the latter's meeting with Poska and Seljamaa. The Ambassador writes that on January 2, 1918, he was called on by two members of the Russian Constituent Assembly (J. Poska and J. Seljamaa) who told him: "Independence was promised to Estonia by the Germans, who sent delegates to Estonia for that purpose, but only on the condition that the territory should come under German protectorate." Francis did not express his point of view, saying that for the United States "it was very difficult to take a stand and make a decision with regard to the proclamation and execution of Estonia's independence ... at the time it was impossible to make any promises."

The reports of the British and US diplomats of the visits of the representatives of Estonian

E. von Dellingshausen, leader of the Baltic-German aristocracy, handing over the Berlin recommendation to the Estonian bourgeois parties, asks for Germany's help in order to overthrow Soviet power. The proposal was accepted at a secret meeting on January 13, 1918.

The invitation of the German troops to Estonia was concerted with British, French and the United States diplomats in Petrograd.

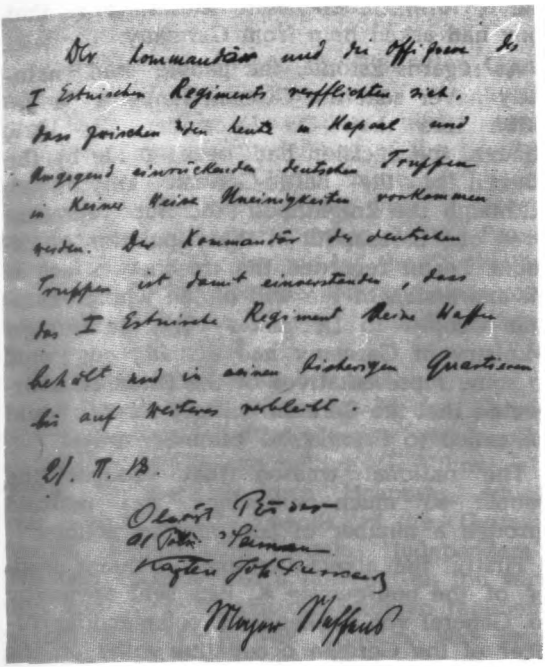
F. O. Lindley, the representative of the Western Powers in Petrograd, was aware of the conspiracy against Soviet power in Russia that was being organized by the Western countries.

bourgeois parties contain a rather essential detail for contemplation: neither diplomat took a negative stand concerning the calling of the German troops to Estonia although their countries were at war with Germany. What to make of that?

Firstly, the standpoint of the English diplomat was quite unambiguous: Estonia should become part of the Russian empire if the latter were restored. On the other hand, he never dissuaded the Estonian politicians from applying for a German occupation, nor did he suggest resistance to the occupation troops of Wilhelm II. Evidently it is to be taken into account that although the Entente powers did not want Germany's hegemony over Russia, they would have fully approved of Germany penetrating as deep as possible into Russia and engaging a considerable part of its troops there. That would have sped up the Entente's victory in the West and afterwards the defeated German army could have been used, under the control of the Entente, of course, for destroying the Soviet state. Further on we shall see that this was the very course the Western powers took.

In the beginning of 1918, the conditions for an intervention against Soviet Russia were not yet ripe. Neither had Estonia been assigned a concrete role. Her occupation by the German troops, however, would have considerably weakened the Soviet state.

Thus it has been established that the leaders of the Estonian bourgeoisie contacted the German military authorities between 1917 and 1918, in order to ask them to overthrow Soviet power in Estonia. The Germans, however, aware of the attitude of the Estonian people towards them, suggested that the whole operation should be conducted under the label of secession from Russia and proclamation of independence.



Der Kommandeur und die Offiziere des I Estnischen Regiments verpflichten sich, dass jeglicher Widerstand gegen die heute in Narwa und Umgegend einrückenden deutschen Truppen in keiner Weise Unannehmlichkeiten vorkommen werden. Der Kommandeur der deutschen Truppen ist damit einverstanden, dass das I Estnische Regiment seine Waffen behält und in seinen bisherigen Quartieren bis auf weiteres verbleibt.

E/. V. 18.

Oberst Pödder
Ol Päts 'Laiman
Kapten Jõb Luiman

Major Steffens

On February 21, 1918, Commander of Estonian bourgeois troops E. Pödder concluded a treaty with Major Steffens; his soldiers were not to resist the occupation forces, but had to join them. The original of the treaty in the German language.

For more than twenty years the official version was that Estonia had been proclaimed an independent republic on February 24, 1918.

And yet the future Head of the State Konstantin Päts has stated that the proclamation of independence "was made at the last moment and thus became rather like a musical comedy farce."

Preparations for the proclamation of independence.

This is how historical materials describe the event.

On January 1, 1918, German Emperor Wilhelm II declared that the peoples of Estonia and other outlaying provinces of Russia had announced their wish to secede from Russia

The announcement of the German imperial government concerning "assistance".

and to form independent states. For that they had asked help from Germany.

As regards Estonia, the people had naturally never sent the German Emperor a petition like that. On December 13, 1917, though, the decision had been made by the council of the Baltic-German knighthood. Although the knighthood did not represent even one thousandth of the population of Estonia, Berlin regarded the treacherous act as an expression of the will of the whole Estonian people. In December 1917, the Foreign Ministry of Germany had actually suggested to some representatives of the Estonian bourgeoisie that the German military forces should be called to Estonia "to establish order".

National treason No. 1. K. Päts, one of the leaders of the Estonian right wing (Peasants' League), got in touch with the German Army Command on the Estonian islands in February, 1918. Päts wanted the Germans to occupy Tallinn.

The national treason that brought the people so much suffering was realized through a number of conspiratory actions.

Firstly, the above-mentioned militant leader of the bourgeoisie K. Päts sent an envoy to General von Seckendorff, commanding officer of the German occupation army on the Estonian islands, to make arrangements for the crossing over of his army to the mainland. The German general was informed that the Estonian regiment in the coastal region would offer no resistance. Commander of the regiment E. Põdder vouched for that and promised to surrender to the German troops upon their arrival.

That was treason number one.

Having got a favourable answer from General Seckendorff and learned obout the time appointed for the beginning of the operation, a three-member "Estonian Salvation Committee" was formed with the same K. Päts at the head. The list of the committee members had also been drawn up by K. Päts. It was neither discussed nor confirmed at any conference or meeting of the parties, not even at

a secret one. Thus it was an entirely private affair.

Whom or what would the "Salvation Committee" save? The German army was invading Estonia. The committee never even thought of organizing defence of the country against the enemy. Even more, it never appealed to the world public with a protest against the aggression; neither did the Provisional Government formed by the "Salvation Committee". Quite on the contrary, their representatives set out to give a grand welcome to the conquerors.

That was treason number two.

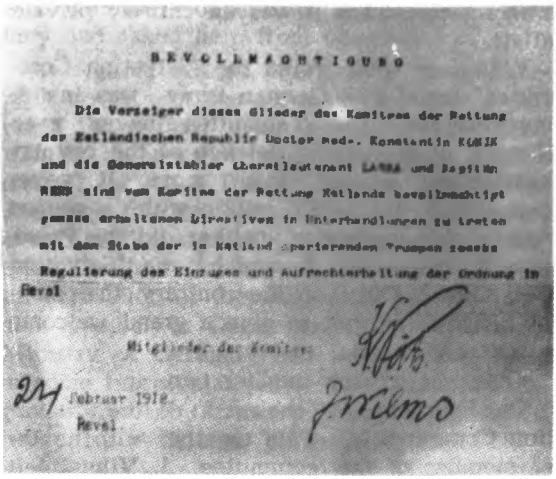
On February 21, chairman of the "Salvation Committee" K. Päts together with another member of the committee, J. Vilms, left Tallinn for the little town Haapsalu, which was already in the hands of the German troops, to proclaim Estonia "independent". The trip, though, was a failure: on the way they met soldiers from the Estonian regiment which, according to the promise, was supposed to have surrendered to the German army's command. The soldiers opened fire. The better part of the regiment had deserted the treacherous commander. The so-called Salvation Committee fled back to Tallinn.

On February 22, they received a message from the German Commander that his army would reach Tallinn in the evening of February 24 or on the following morning. Now, in the afternoon dusk of February 24, a few dozen posters with the "Manifesto of Independence" were pasted up in some parts of Tallinn. Since the people of Tallinn were forbidden to be in the streets after 9 o'clock p. m., very few people learned about the establishment of the "state". A delegation of the "Salvation Committee" was sent to meet the German troops on the night of February 24. Next morning another delegation of military

National treason No. 2. Dr. Waltz, representative of France in Stockholm, said in April, 1918: "As the Estonian leaders have not protested against the occupation of their country, it must be concluded that they invited the enemy themselves."

E. Põdder, the Commander of the "National Regiment", who placed his troops under the German command.

The Estonian "Salvation Committee's" warrant read that Dr. Konstantin Konik, Lt. Col. Larka and Cpt. Reek would regulate the invasion of the German army into Tallinn. The German warrant dates from February 24, 1918, i. e. from the day the Estonian Republic was said to have been proclaimed. The original of the warrant.



BEVOLLMAECHTIGUNG

Die Vorzeiger dieses Glieder des Komitees der Rettung der Estländischen Republic Doctor med. Konstantin KONIK und die Generalstabler Oberstleutnant LARKA und Kapitän REEK sind vom Komitee der Rettung Estlands bevollmächtigt gemäss erhaltenen Direktiven in Unterhandlungen zu treten mit dem Stabe der in Estland operierenden Truppen zwecks Regulierung des Einzuges und Aufrechterhaltung der Ordnung in Revel

Mitglieder des Komitees

24 Februar 1918.
Revel

National treason No. 3. Those who proclaimed the Republic entered the service of the German occupation authorities.

men was sent out. They led the German army into Tallinn. At noon the latter were met with an orchestra in the centre of the town. "Prime Minister" K. Päts himself was busy providing the German headquarters with information as to where military force was needed to liquidate the Soviets.

Was this the birth of the independent republic of Estonia and February 24 its date of birth? What is there to prove it?

Did the independent Estonian Republic exist in February 1918?

Let us say that much: the self-appointed "Salvation Committee" had to hide in Tallinn nearly until the Germans marched in, by which time the Soviet organs of power had been evacuated by sea. True enough, the "Salvation Committee" managed to issue five orders of the day. The first of these — to liquidate the Soviet institutions — was carried out not by the Provisional Government of Estonia, but by the German occupation forces. The second order — to read out "The Manifesto of Independence" in all the churches — was

not carried out because the German authorities were against it. As regards the Provisional Government, its establishment was not acknowledged by the German military authorities, and virtually it was not in power for even an hour. The order to the reservists to report to the unit headquarters was again carried out at the command of the occupation authorities. The only "independent" action was the leading into Tallinn and reception of the occupation army.

Consequently, February 24, 1918, was not the date of the establishment of the bourgeois Estonian Republic, but the date of the occupation of Estonia by the troops of Kaiser's Germany.

This is how the declaration of independence was turned into a "musical comedy farce" as the "head of the state" himself later admitted.

Although February 24 remained the official date of the "establishment" of statehood, the circumstances connected with it were so embarrassing that it became necessary to choose a more appropriate date.

The invasion of the German troops into Estonia is described, among other authors, by E. Dellingshausen: Im Dienste der Heimat, Stuttgart, 1930; E. Ludendorff, Meine Kriegserinnerungen 1914—1918, Berlin, 1919; H. Kaupisch, Die Befreiung von Livland und Estland, Oldenburg, 1918.

SERVANTS OF MANY MASTERS

THUS, events started to develop in Estonia which left their imprint of insecurity and often contributed to serious hardships in the people's life. The reason for it was the policy of the Estonian bourgeoisie that from the start served the interests of one western power or another. Time itself has proved that the Estonian bourgeoisie had no backbone to conduct an independent policy. A strange, although not a rare phenomenon was born: an independent state without an independent policy.

Actually, after the German occupation in February 1918, there was no more talk of independence. It wasn't recalled either by those who had proclaimed it or by those who had offered it. Neither was the issue of the German protectorate mentioned. Occupation forces settled down in the country. General von Seckendorff neither sent his card to Estonia's Prime Minister K. Päts, nor invited him to his place to recall the former friendly contacts established through secret couriers, or to talk about plans for the future.

The comical dialogue between the representative of the Estonian Provisional Government and the aide-de-camp of General Seckendorff: nobody had heard about the Estonian Government.

Some days later the General declared that the government, formed at the decision of some separate parties, had no legitimate power.

A tragi-comic conversation was held between the Baltic German Wildenau, representative of the Provisional Government, and von Seckendorff's aide-de-camp V. Flotoff in the latter's waiting-room. The conversation took place a day after the German troops had

marched into Tallinn. The minutes taken have been preserved.

Wild.: When could General Seckendorff receive the E(stonian) P(rovisional) Government?

Fl.: There's no government like that. The German army has invaded the country, and the Commander is forming the Government. We have been informed about the matters here well enough. Are you a member of that government?

Wild.: No, I've been elected by it. The E(stonian) P(rovisional) Government is the representative of the people, elected by them. Its wish is to negotiate with the Command of the German Army. In case you object to negotiations, I'd like to get a definite answer.

Fl.: No meetings are allowed at present, and those who disobey the law will be punished. I should like to know what kind of government it is — is it that of maximalists, a tsarist government or some other? Who are the members of this government?

Wild.: It's not a maximalist government, but elected by the people, at general and proportional elections. Päts, Poska, Vilms and others are its members.

Fl.: Would you wait, please. I'll talk to His Excellency.

In about a quarter of an hour.

Fl.: His Excellency asked me to tell you he couldn't receive those gentlemen, not because he wouldn't like to, but because his military duties don't permit him. In any case, the law must be obeyed.

So those who only a day earlier had been met with a brass band, pretended to know nothing of the "Estonian Government"; the government in its turn didn't blush when lying about general and proportional elections (!).

While the Estonian bourgeoisie tried to get into contact with the command of the occu-

A. von Seckendorff, career officer of the German Imperial Army, was the military governor of the Estonian islands in 1917.
From March to November, 1918, he was the Chief of the German General Command in Estonia.

"The liberated" were not acknowledged by the "liberators".
The people were betrayed again.

pation army, the Estonian Red Guard was fighting hopeless but courageous battles against the invaders. Those battles lasted till the beginning of March. At times the occupants were even made to retreat. The forces, however, were unequal, and the treason too great.

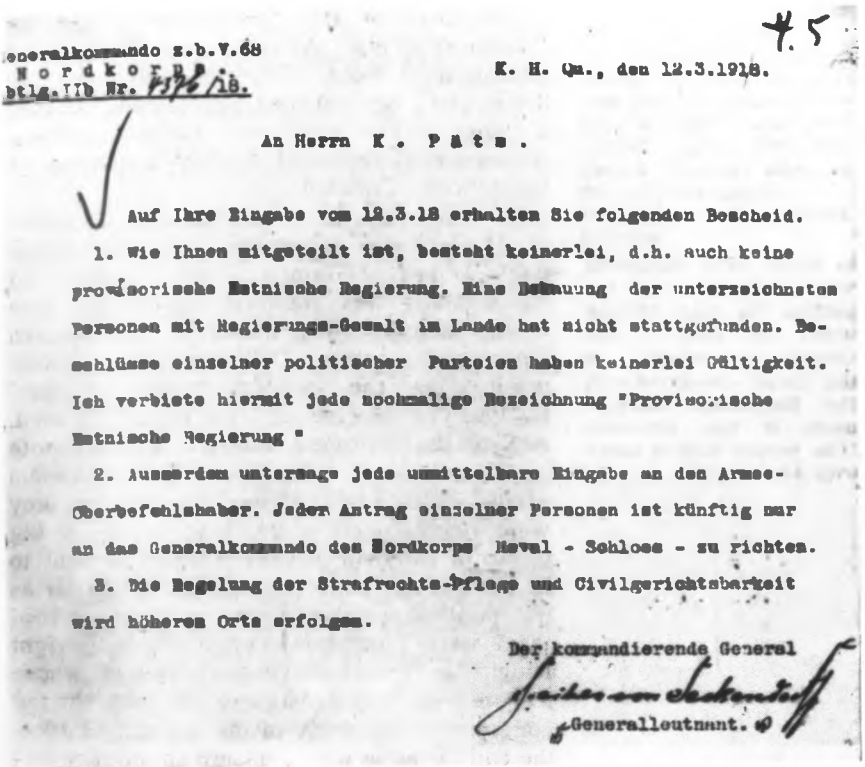
The Prime Minister of a sovereign state promises every possible help to the occupants.

When General Seckendorff at last received Prime Minister K. Päts, the latter said: "We are glad that the aim for which Your Excellency is striving — to establish peace and order in our country — coincides with our goals. We, on behalf of the social groups we represent, want to offer our help to the military government in every possible way."

So finally the situation was clear: the Estonian "government" did no longer pretend to represent the whole nation, but only some groups of it. It didn't pretend to aim at ruling Estonia, but only at helping the German military government "in every possible way".

Despite that, General Seckendorff forbade the use of the name of the "Estonian Provision-

Very soon members of the German emperor's court started to visit and inspect Estonia. In the picture Prussian Prince Heinrich, the pretender to the throne of the Baltic Dukedom, receives a parade in Tallinn.



Generalkommando z.b.V.68
Nordkorps.
Abtlg.IIb Nr. 1176/18.

4.5

K. H. Qu., den 12.3.1918.

An Herrn K. P ä t s .

Auf Ihre Eingabe vom 12.3.18 erhalten Sie folgenden Bescheid.

1. Wie Ihnen mitgeteilt ist, besteht keinerlei, d.h. auch keine provisorische Estnische Regierung. Eine Benennung der unterzeichneten Personen mit Regierungs-Gewalt im Lande hat nicht stattgefunden. Beschlüsse einzelner politischer Parteien haben keinerlei Gültigkeit. Ich verbiete hiermit jede nochmalige Bezeichnung "Provisorische Estnische Regierung "

2. Ausserdem untersage jede unmittelbare Eingabe an den Armee-Oberbefehlshaber. Jeder Antrag einzelner Personen ist künftig nur an das Generalkommando des Nordkorps Reval - Schloss - zu richten.

3. Die Regelung der Strafrechts-Pflege und Civilgerichtsbarkeit wird höheren Orts erfolgen.

Der kommandierende General
Freiherr von Seckendorff
Generalleutnant.

al Government". Decision-making concerning the fate of Estonia and the whole Baltic area was entrusted to German barons, and not to the natives. There were only about 700 German families among the million-strong Estonian population. At the end of March, their Diet adopted the decision to link the Baltic provinces to Germany. In April, the joint Baltic-German Diet proposed to form the Baltic Dukedom that would be in a personal union with Germany.

Neither the so-called "Estonian Provisional Government" nor its "diplomatic embassy" abroad objected to those developments. Sever-

On March 12, 1918, General von Seckendorff announced that the persons called the Estonian government had actually never been in power, and the declaration of some single political parties had no legal force. For that reason he did not recognize the Provisional Government.
The original in the German language.

al members of the "government", such as "Minister of War" A. Larka and "Minister of Education" P. Põld were even employed by the military occupational government. A. Rei, a leader of the right-wing social-democrats, served the Germans as chief of a division of the Military Tribunal.

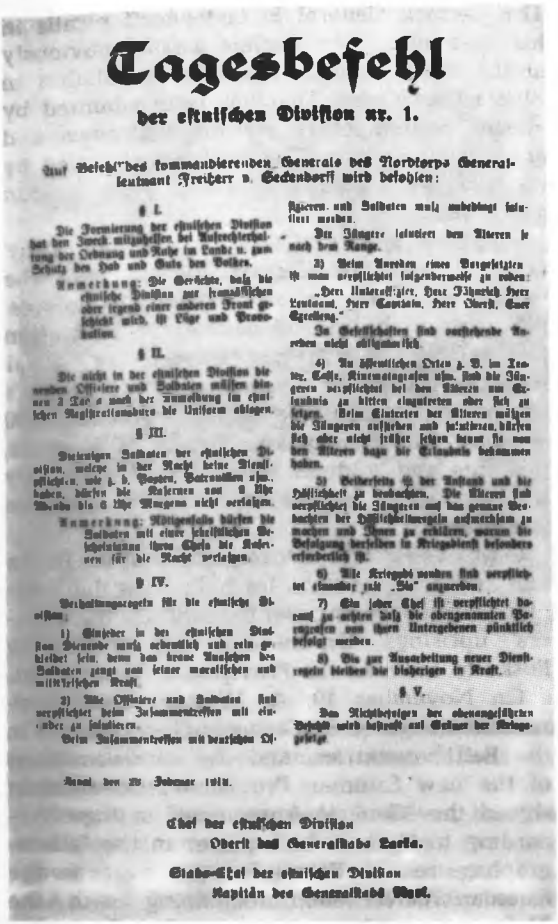
In April, 1918, signatures were collected for the petition "to take Estonia under the wing of the German motherland". In the circles connected with the Provisional Government, it was declared: "The people wish a union with Germany."

On September 22, 1918, Wilhelm II, Emperor of Germany, recognized the independent Baltic Dukedom. Prince Adolf Friedrich of Mecklenburg was asked to assume the rule of the dukedom. The leader of the Estonian knighthood baron Dellingshausen recommended that the stateless "prime minister" K. Päts be elected to the regent council. Among the Estonian officers it was quite openly discussed that the Baltic Dukedom needed soldiers and officers too, and that they were ready to serve the new power. A big group of Estonian officers were to be sent to higher military schools in Germany. As far as the political parties were concerned, all of them were liquidated, except the ultra-right wing, the "Peasants' League", one of whose leaders was "Prime Minister" K. Päts. At the congress of that party in the summer of 1918, the collaboration with the German military forces was approved of, and its continuation recommended. Thus the Dukedom was acknowledged, as well as the integration of Estonia in it.

The leading bourgeois party of Estonia approves of the collaboration with the German occupation authorities.

High treason was in progress. It seems there was no possibility to go further. But if we recall the party-leaders' visits to the ambassadors of Great Britain, the USA and France in Petrograd at the outset of the year, we can't have any doubts about the planning and foreseeing of the whole situation. "We prefer the regime of the German protectorate," the former governor Jaan Poska had stated.

One day, however, it happened that all these plans failed.



Tagesbefehl

der estnischen Division nr. 1.

Auf Befehl des kommandierenden Generals des Nordkorps Generalleutnant Freiherr v. Seckendorff wird befohlen:

§ I.

Die Formierung der estnischen Division hat den Zweck mitzuhelfen bei Aufrechterhaltung der Ordnung und Ruhe im Lande u. zum Schutz des Hab und Gutes des Volkes.

Anmerkung: Die Gerüchte, daß die estnische Division zur französischen oder irgend einer anderen Front geschickt wird, ist Lüge und Provokation.

§ II.

Die nicht in der estnischen Division dienenden Offiziere und Soldaten müssen binnen 3 Tag. nach der Ankündigung im estnischen Regimentsbureau die Uniform ablegen.

§ III.

Diejenigen Soldaten der estnischen Division, welche in der Nacht keine Dienstpflichten, wie z. B. Posten, Patrouillen usw., haben, dürfen die Kasernen von 6 Uhr Abends bis 6 Uhr Morgens nicht verlassen.

Anmerkung: Ausnahmsfalls dürfen die Soldaten mit einer schriftlichen Bescheinigung ihres Chefs die Kasernen für die Nacht verlassen.

§ IV.

Verhaltungsregeln für die estnische Division:

1) Einjeder in der estnischen Division Dienende muß ordentlich und rein gekleidet sein, denn das braune Aussehen des Soldaten zeugt von seiner moralischen und militärischen Kraft.

2) Alle Offiziere und Soldaten sind verpflichtet beim Zusammentreffen mit einander zu salutieren.

Beim Zusammentreffen mit deutschen Offizieren und Soldaten muß unbedingt salutiert werden.

Die Jüngere salutiert den Älteren je nach dem Range.

3) Beim Anreden eines Vorgesetzten ist man verpflichtet folgendermaßen zu reden: „Herr Unteroffizier, Herr Fähnrich, Herr Leutnant, Herr Captain, Herr Oberst, Euer Exzellenz."

In Gesellschaften sind vorstehende Anreden nicht obligatorisch.

4) In öffentlichen Orten z. B. im Theater, Cafés, Restaurationsgärten usw. sind die Jüngeren verpflichtet bei den Älteren um Erlaubnis zu bitten eingetreten oder sich zu setzen. Beim Eintreten der Älteren müssen die Jüngeren aufstehen und salutieren, dürfen sich aber nicht früher setzen bevor sie von den Älteren dazu die Erlaubnis bekommen haben.

5) Beobachtet in der Anstand und die Höflichkeit zu beobachten. Die Älteren sind verpflichtet die Jüngeren auf den genauer Beobachten der Höflichkeitsregeln aufmerksam zu machen und ihnen zu erklären, worum die Befolgung derselben in Kriegsdienst besonders erforderlich ist.

6) Alle Kriegsgut wenden sind verpflichtet einander mit „Sie" anzureden.

7) Ein jeder Chef ist verpflichtet darauf zu achten daß die obengenannten Vorgesetzten von ihren Untergebenen pünktlich befolgt werden.

8) Bis zur Ausarbeitung neuer Dienstregeln bleiben die bisherigen in Kraft.

§ V.

Das Nichtbefolgen der obenangeführten Befehle wird bestraft auf Grund der Kriegsgesetze.

Reval, den 28. Februar 1918.

Chef der estnischen Division
Oberst des Generalstabs Larka.

Stabs-Chef der estnischen Division
Kapitän des Generalstabs Rauk.

At the order of General von Seckendorff of the German occupation forces, the Estonian division led by Colonel Larka and Captain Reek was formed. Later both men played leading roles in the German agency.
The order in the German language.

On the 5th of November, 1918, a revolution broke out in Germany. It spread quickly, and the sailors of the German Navy hoisted a red flag in the port of Tallinn, too. The military leaders of Germany admitted later that "the soldiers' demands had the same pattern as the corresponding Russian ones."

Workers' Soviets were formed in Tallinn, once again.

By the summer of 1918, a candidate had been found to rule over Estonians and Latvians: Duke Adolf Friedrich of Mecklenburg from Germany.

The German General E. Ludendorff recalls in his memoirs: "Our decline started obviously at the same moment when the revolution in Russia broke out." That has been admitted by all the contemporary western statesmen and army commanders. The people, exhausted by the war, were greatly attracted by the Russian revolution.

But, as a matter of fact, the German Army rebelled, and the German power over the Baltic countries began to fall to pieces. Already on the second day of the revolution General Seckendorff had scarcely any loyal forces left in Tallinn to suppress the people's demonstrations in the streets. About 7,000 workers went on strike. Soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers were formed again. By the way, they were formed in the German Army as well.

On November 10, Seckendorff sent for Poska and asked, in his turn, for help from the Estonian bourgeoisie, in order to suppress the workers' uprisings. On the same day he wrote to Poska to convoke the Provisional Government.

On November 19, A. Winnig, Chief Representative of the German Government in the Baltic countries, and the representatives of the new Estonian Provisional Government signed the "General Agreement" in Riga. According to it, the whole power in the "ethnographic area of Estonia" went over to the Estonian Government, beginning with the 21st of November. And on the day after signing the treaty, the delegates of the Provisional Land Committee of the Estonian Province assembled under the protection of the German soldiers who still were faithful to Seckendorff.

The administrative power went into the hands of the Estonian Provisional Government.
"The Agreement of Transferring the Power" was not ratified by the German Government.

What could not be done on the 28th of November, 1917, or on February 24, 1918, became unexpectedly possible. Although not recognized by anybody — not even by the

German and Russian soldiers fraternize at the front in the spring of 1918. Anti-war revolts break out in Europe.

German Government — the bourgeois Estonian state and its government started their existence *de facto*.

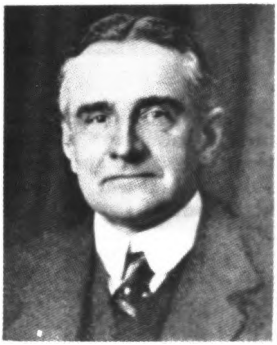
Soon it became apparent, however, that the unexpected power didn't enable the new government to take any effective steps.

A. Peet, Minister for Internal Affairs of the Provisional Government, wrote in his memoirs:

"The situation was so alarming that even some members of the government were planning to escape, and, as I learned later, a ship had been prepared for that purpose in Paldiski. It had been recommended that the government members shouldn't sleep at home. Together with K. Päts, we slept on the floor of a house in the yard of the Arts and Crafts School for several nights. In its time, the

What to do with a windfall state power?
Eye to eye with the people.

On November 11, 1918, Germany had signed the Armistice of Compiègne. The armistice envisaged that the German troops should stay on the territory of the former Russian Empire up to the time appointed by the Entente.



Professor James Young Simpson, the reviewer of the British Foreign Office on East-European problems. At the end of the critical 1918, he supported the demands of the Estonian Government for help from Germany, and also for asking the British men-of-war to Tallinn.

Salvation Committee had been hiding there for five days.

K. Päts couldn't go home for a month and a half. Mostly he slept in my flat, and sometimes at other places."

The most dramatic development was that, despite the Provisional Government's appeal, the German troops refused to make war against Soviet soldiers and left the country. As it soon transpired, Germany thus broke the treaty of capitulation envisaged by the Entente, foreseeing that the German troops be kept in the Baltic countries to fight against Soviet Russia.

The Provisional Government of Estonia sent one telegram after another to London and Paris asking the Entente to make haste in forcing the Germans to stay. On November 29, the telegram ran: "... not to let the German troops desert the front here ..." On December 2: "In Estonia the Germans' departure is watched with anxiety ..." On December 4, it was asked, "Send German occupation troops to Tallinn immediately." Next, the representatives of the Estonian Provisional Government visited Lord Balfour, the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain. A démarche was presented. It read that, contrary to Article 12 of the peace treaty between the Entente and Germany, the German troops had arbitrarily deserted Estonia and should carry the whole responsibility for it.

What caused such panic?

The existence of the Estonian Provisional Government and of its power established with the help of the German Army Command was at stake. It goes without saying that a government hasn't got enough power when its prime minister must spend nights at strangers' and hide himself in the capital of his own state — as it was described in the memoirs of the home secretary. Such a situation was mainly

caused by the attitude of the population's majority. A Workers' Soviet had been formed in Tallinn once again, and the Provisional Government was not able to disperse it. The Soviet was ready to proclaim Soviet power that had been interrupted by the German occupation. The bourgeois government hoped to safeguard its authority by shooting at the people's demonstrations, but at the same time it was keeping the way open to escape . . . At the end of November the position of the Tallinn government had become especially critical. On November 29, the Government of the Estonian Soviet Republic was formed in the frontier town of Narva, which had been liberated from the German troops. The liberators were Soviet troops — the Red Riflemen's Regiments and others. The Estonian Soviet Republic was proclaimed under the name of the Commune of the Estonian Working People. What had been interrupted by the invasion of the German troops in February 1918, came now true.

The people prepare to re-establish Soviet power. The Estonian Soviet Republic is proclaimed. Civil war breaks out in Estonia.

On December 8, 1918, the government of Soviet Russia declared that it recognized the Estonian Soviet Republic's government as an independent government of an independent state. The government, headed by Jaan Anvelt, a popular leader of the working-class movement, started to arrange the public life on two-thirds of the liberated territory. Very often people established Soviet power even before the arrival of the red troops, as, for example, in the university town Tartu, the biggest centre in South Estonia.

That was the reason why the Tallinn bourgeois government was sending signals of distress to the Western powers: only foreign interference could save the bourgeois parties' power.

The Estonian Provisional Government was not able to mobilize the army. Thus, up to the arrival of the British fleet, the German occupation forces were supporting the government.

The Estonian bourgeois government made desperate attempts to avoid the approaching

Rear-Admiral E. Sinclair. He was the commander of the British fleet on the Baltic Sea up to the beginning of 1919.
J. Laidoner, Commander-in-Chief of the Government's forces, stated: "If the British fleet had not reached Tallinn, history would have taken a completely different turn."

catastrophe. On November 17, volunteers were called to the army. Instead of the envisaged 25—30 thousand men, only a few hundred came. Together with the former troopers from the German Bürgerwehr who were now called defence leaguers, the Provisional Government had about 1,000 soldiers at its disposal. Next, an obligatory mobilization was announced, but the majority of the mobilized soldiers ran away.

The Estonian people had no wish to serve the government of traitors, who only ten months earlier had entered the German invaders' employ.

The events of that stage came to a culmination at the end of December, 1918. The front was in the nearest vicinity of Tallinn. On December 27, the former Provisional Land Committee of the Provisional Government, now called the Diet, assembled. Let's quote the minutes of the meeting.

Commander-in-Chief Laidoner: "Shall we be able to carry out our liberation war without any help from abroad? I say, we'll not be able to do that."

Prime Minister and Minister of War K. Päts: "The Provisional Government has left nothing undone to get help. It hasn't even shied at making concessions."

K. Päts announced that a delegation had been sent to Paris to negotiate with the governments of the Entente. The proposals were as follows: total independence, federation with Finland, the Alliance of the Baltic States, a part of the Russian Federation, a protectorate of some other state.

The rulers of Estonia had once again forgotten that they had already proclaimed their country independent. That fact was evidently of a propagandist nature rather than of real importance.

TO HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

The Estonian National Council at its meeting on the 27 December, having discussed the military and international situation of the country resolved:

As the Estonian Republic is forced to fight at present against the bolshevism of Russia, which has at its disposal enormous resources of materials and men, whereas the young Estonian Republic, after the withdrawal of the German occupation troops, has been left in a desolated state without trained troops, without military supplies and sufficient money to effectively oppose the advancing crowds of bolshevists:

To entrust His Majesty's Government to occupy and to take under their military protection the territory of the Estonian Republic, placing under their higher command all different military forces already gathered, as well as to be gathered by means of the Estonian Republic making the best use of them, to the end of successfully fighting oppressing bolshevism.

"28" December 1918.

The President of the National Council.

The Secretary

The Representatives of the fractions of the Council.

of the Socialdemocrats

of the Labour Party

of the National Party

of the Peasant's Party

The Estonian Land Committee (Diet) asks Great Britain to occupy Estonia. The original of the appeal.

A secret meeting of the Diet on December 27, 1919. The Estonian Government decides to ask Great Britain to occupy Estonia. The petition to the British Government.

On the agenda of the 27th of December meeting was one item: "The sending of a delegation to the commander of the British Navy."

In the minutes of the speeches of the members of the Provisional Government it was recorded:

J. Teemant: "It's clear that the bolsheviks are 50 versts from Tallinn. Shall we manage to defend ourselves? The government should probably do something to have us occupied. Shouldn't we do something to have our country occupied by the English?"

Prime Minister K. Päts: "This wish has been expressed in the Provisional Government at least 20 times. I can only say that we have done everything possible in this direction. A step forward, however, is that the English have captured two Russian ships. It has been reported that the British Admiral will return with his fleet. My proposal is to send representatives of the country to the Admiral and ask him to occupy us."

Next follows an extract from the petition to the British Government.

Confidential

Having discussed the military and international situation of the country at the meet-

December, 1918. English men-of-war reach the roadsteads of Tallinn. Terror against the supporters of Soviet power breaks out in Estonia.

ing on December 27, 1918, the Estonian Land Committee came to the following conclusion: . . . to ask His Britannic Majesty's Government to occupy the Estonian Republic and take it under military protection; at that, to take under its command all the military forces that have already been conscripted at the expense of the Estonian Republic and will be convened in the future in order to fight against the advancing Bolsheviks.

Chairman of the Land Committee (A. Birk)
Secretary (K. Ast)
Representatives of Parties at the Diet:
On behalf of the Social Democrats (K. Grau)
" " " Labour Party (J. Seljamaa)
" " " People's Party (A. Birk)
" " " Peasants' League (J. Teemant)

This "Estonian independence" appeared rather strange in the interpretation of the Land Committee and government leaders. It could be proclaimed overnight and abandoned as fast, then solemnly re-established, only in order to try and find somebody to whom to submit once again. And all that was only done to save bourgeois property.

The people's mood in Estonia after the revolution of 1917.

Reflexions of the elections.

The popularity of socialist ideas.

ACCORDING to the conception of bourgeois historians, circulating as the official version in the 1930s, the proclamation of the bourgeois Estonian republic was a manifestation of the will of the people. The same circles have always alleged that the Estonian people had not supported the Soviet regime, and that the very idea of socialism was alien to the people of an individualistic mentality.

What is there to prove these allegations?

The problem of the people's mood is naturally essential for corroborating official conceptions. To ascertain this means to tell the truth from a lie. At the time of the events with which we are concerned here, as far back as the 1920s, there was talk not of "national integrity" but of national dissidence, a part of the population supporting the Soviet revolution, another part expecting "salvation" from the West. From the assertion of the leader of the bourgeoisie K. Päts to the German occupation authorities that the latter have the wholehearted support of the sections of the population represented by the government (i. e. of the bourgeoisie) in establishing "peace and order", it could be inferred that they expected to root out the popularity of Soviet power solely by resorting to extremely drastic measures. There are many similar circumstances that corroborate neither the conception of "national

integrity" nor the allegation that the idea of socialism was alien to the Estonians.

If the situation was indeed such as claimed by bourgeois ideologists, then why was it necessary to call for the help of the German occupation army, or, after it had left, to ask for an English occupation?

Here are a few facts that will help to find answers to these questions. The people's mood is quite often reflected in the outcome of elections, especially at times when society is faced with complicated problems.

During the days of the birth of Estonian statehood, the Communists got almost a half of the votes among the six bigger parties.

The bourgeois bloc set its hopes on its arms.

In the summer of 1917, 85 of the 101 members elected to the town council in Tallinn were people with socialist mandates. Over one third of them were Communists. Communists were elected to the posts of mayor and chairman of the Town Council. In Narva, another larger industrial town of Estonia, the Communists got half of the votes and formed the municipality. Before the October Revolution communists also gained absolute majority in the workers' and peasants' Soviets of Estonia.

Elections to the Russian Constituent Assembly were held in mid-November, 1917. In Estonia the Communist candidates got 41 per cent of the votes and a half of the mandates, all that thanks to the numerous working class. Communists enjoyed especially warm support in the army. As compared to August, the number of votes given to Communists in Tallinn rose from 31 per cent to 48 per cent in November. The number of the votes given to the bourgeois parties fell from 36 to 13. In Estonia the parties with a socialist platform got three times as many mandates as the bourgeois bloc. A large majority of the people were in favour of a transition to socialism and of the nationalization of large-scale industry and the landed property of the big landowners.

The Communist Party was banned.

The Social Democrats used the program of the Communists and won the elections.

After the Estonian bourgeoisie had come to power at the turn of 1918, the Communist Party of Estonia was banned and remained so throughout the existence of the Republic (November, 1918, till June 21, 1940); therefore its influence was not reflected in the results of elections. In the elections to the Estonian Constituent Assembly in 1919, though, the parties with a socialist platform got 64 per cent of the votes. However, having come to power, those parties sided with the bourgeosie, thus betraying their electors whose support they had won with promises to establish socialist labour laws, to give the control over industry to the working people (and the state), to confiscate landed property, etc. The promises that mirrored the demands of the majority of the people were naturally never kept.

The trade union movement remained under the leadership of the Communists until December 1924. Then the bourgeois government liquidated all the trade unions that were under the influence of the Communists.

J. Laidoner had been an officer of the Russian General Staff during World War I. After the revolution he joined the British Intelligence. In order to form an anti-Soviet army, he ordered to shoot everybody who tried to avoid mobilization.

The people's mood was also reflected in other matters besides elections. One way to learn about the political convictions of the people is to ascertain their attitude towards the anti-Soviet war waged from November 22, 1918, till the end of 1919, and towards the simultaneous oppression of the Estonian working people.

As mentioned above, the bourgeois government prepared to flee from the country because the people refused to submit to the order of mobilization.

Minister of Justice Jaakson said at the meeting of the Land Committee on February 4, 1919: "Out of the first two thousand men whom the Provisional Government had managed to provide with arms and other necessary equipment, 70 per cent scattered to their home

districts, continuing to live openly there. There is no force capable of bringing them back. The prisons are full." Commander-in-chief J. Laidoner said at the meeting of the Land Committee on December 27, 1918: "I must admit that our people have no faith... We could not keep more than about 300 people at the Northern Front." Commanding officer of the front A. Tõnisson made a statement concerning the Defence League of his section of the front (Virumaa): "The Defence League of Virumaa (an organization converted from the German Bürgerwehr into an armed defence unit of the bourgeoisie) had 2,100 members; only 30 of them have remained on the spot, for the sole reason that they are stationed in a separate carriage near the headquarters and consist of mere schoolboys." And yet there were nearly as many officers as soldiers in the Estonian troops at the Northern Front. At the Southern Front, a third part of the 4,500-strong Northern Corps of the Russian White Guard formed by the German occupation authorities were also officers.

German baron W. Wrangell, who was born in Estonia, wrote later: "It was a civil war not only from the legal point of view. A majority of the population also regarded it as that, above all because the Red Army consisted of Estonians and because an Estonian government was established in Narva as soon as it was taken, and later on in Rakvere." The German baron meant the Soviet Government of Estonia.

Baron W. Wrangell corrects the Estonian nationalists who called the war "a war of independence".

These facts are far from proving the validity of the bourgeois historians' conceptions of the "homogenous people" and the "homogenous will". But there is even more evidence to be found in the statements made by the bourgeois leaders themselves.

In April 1919, when the whole of Estonia was still under the control of the Provisional

The Prime Minister complains about the disloyalty of the people.

Government, Prime Minister K. Päts stated in the Constituent Assembly of Estonia: "Our army was forced to fight also against the internal enemy by whom it was surrounded on every side. Damage was done to our army in every possible way, its morale was endangered, it was surrounded by treachery. You should hear the stories our schoolboys told when they returned from the front. Tired and hungry, they went to a farm to ask for some bread, but they got nothing. However, when they claimed to belong to the Red Army, they were given bread and other food."

All that happened in Estonia and among Estonians. Local workers also took an active part in the armed resistance to Laidoner's military units and the Northern Corps (later the North-Western Army) of the Baltic German barons and Russian White Guards. A chronicler of the Northern Front, who took part in the war himself, wrote in 1938 that at the end of 1918 and at the beginning of 1919 the army had to fight in Estonia "without a more or less reliable, trustworthy rear, but, on the contrary, suffering repeated blows from behind . . ." Workers of arms factories went on strikes that could only be suppressed with the help of an armoured train. The same happened in other factories of military significance. A regiment of infantry, many armed defence leaguers, an armoured train and armoured cars were left in Tallinn to keep the people in check.

An armoured train against the workers.

So as to maintain order inside the capital, special shock brigades were formed. Among the soldiers of these brigades there were also Danish mercenaries.

Facts corroborate that in order to keep the bourgeois government in power, hundreds of times more human lives were destroyed with or without trial in 1918 and 1919 than were killed in revolutionary upheavals.

It is known that in the people's uprising at the beginning of 1917, when the tsarist regime was overthrown, about 30 were killed in Estonia, and a prison was set on fire. During the

October Socialist Revolution that gave absolute power to the workers' and soldiers' Soviets, not a single person was killed or wounded in Tallinn. Control was gained without an armed conflict.

Statistics concerning the terror.

In the 1917 revolution 30 people perished.

After the establishment of Soviet power up to the German occupation in February 1918, no enemies were sentenced to death by the Soviet authorities. Neither was there any killing on political motives (except for three revolutionaries killed on the Püssi estate on December 10, and four Red Guardsmen killed near Tartu by landowners and bourgeois Estonian officers). The organizers of counter-revolutionary armed bands were kept under arrest merely from a couple of days to a couple of weeks. It is known: when, at the dispersing of the Diet on November 28, 1918, somebody from the crowd attempted to come to grips with J. Tõnisson (one of the leaders of the bourgeoisie), Communist leader V. Kingissepp intervened at once.

During the German occupation at least 300 political adversaries were executed.

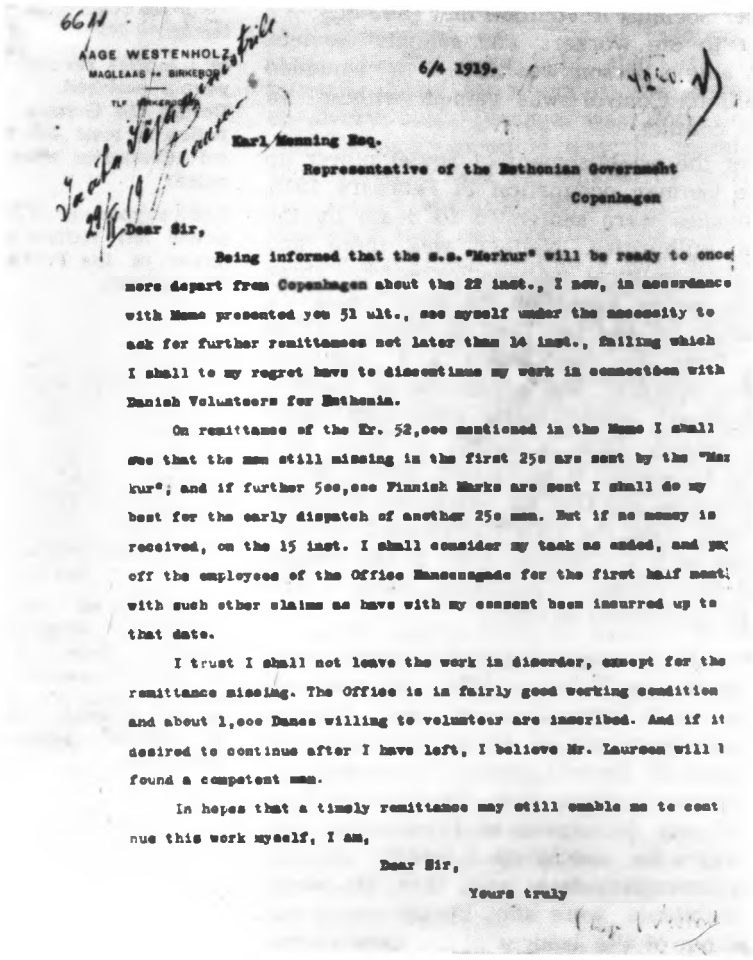
2,000 supporters of Soviet power fell victims to the terror of the Provisional Government.

When the German imperial troops occupied Estonia in February 1918, their officers together with Baltic Germans and Estonian reactionaries began to arrest and annihilate supporters of Soviet power. Thousands of people were arrested with the help of Estonian officers. 50 citizens of Tartu were held as hostages for pasting up a leaflet. According to incomplete data, more than 300 peaceful inhabitants were shot by the occupants. K. Ast, one of the leaders of the social democrats, said at the meeting of the Diet on November 26, 1918: "The majority of the people shot by the German authorities upon the invasion were caught by our own people." This is how K. Päts's circles helped to establish "peace and order".

In acts of terror "national officers" played the main role.

At the same time the Estonian Provisional Government gave the right to pass and carry

A lawful mass terror against different-minded people.



AAGE WESTENHOLZ
MAGLEAAS pr. BIRKEBOR

6/4 1919.

Karl Manning Esq.

Representative of the Esthonian Government

Copenhagen

Dear Sir,

Being informed that the s.s."Merkur" will be ready to once more depart from Copenhagen about the 22 inst., I now, in accordance with Memo presented you 31 ult., see myself under the necessity to ask for further remittances not later than 14 inst., failing which I shall to my regret have to discontinue my work in connection with Danish Volunteers for Esthonia.

On remittance of the Kr. 52,000 mentioned in the Memo I shall see that the men still missing in the first 250 are sent by the "Merkur"; and if further 500,000 Finnish Marks are sent I shall do my best for the early dispatch of another 250 men. But if no money is received, on the 15 inst. I shall consider my task as ended, and pay off the employees of the Office Hausesgade for the first half month with such other claims as have with my consent been incurred up to that date.

I trust I shall not leave the work in disorder, except for the remittance missing. The Office is in fairly good working condition and about 1,000 Danes willing to volunteer are inscribed. And if it desired to continue after I have left, I believe Mr. Laureen will l found a competent man.

In hopes that a timely remittance may still enable me to continue this work myself, I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours truly

The recruiting of mercenaries is to be continued even after the departure of the Soviet troops from Estonia in April, 1919. The mediator Aage Westenholz reports to the diplomatic representative of Estonia in Denmark on the possibilities of getting mercenaries and on the expenses involved.
The original of the letter.

out death sentences, or, to put it plainly, the right to shoot people, to practically every officer. With a law of December 5, 1918, capital punishment was adapted not only to those who eluded military service, but also to those who "acted in any way contrary to the interests of the Estonian Republic or aided the enemy." That meant a legalization of open terror against political opponents. Orders were given to arrest all suspicious persons; in case of disorders, all the people under arrest were to be shot without trial.

At the beginning of January 1919, when the troops of the Provisional Government of Estonia launched a counter-attack with the help of English warships and Finnish mercenaries, terror gathered momentum. All the officials who quit work near the front as well as the military men who disobeyed orders were to be court-martialled and shot. Captain Irv, one of the goriest commanders of the armoured trains — who was later made something of a national hero by bourgeois propaganda — used to take no prisoners. He himself wrote: "We usually shot the enemy soldiers." After the frontier town Narva had been re-conquered, it was reported to a representative of the government in Paris: "No prisoners were taken, everybody whom we caught was killed... and those who surrendered were also killed." The Finnish paper "Suomen Sosiaalidemokraatti" wrote that Estonian courts martial worked in the same way as the Finnish ones had worked a year before, when the workers' power was overthrown in Finland. According to a decree of March 1919, capital punishment in Estonia was to be also extended to those who spread rumours.

Massacres at the front and in the rear aroused protest abroad. Scandinavians pointed out that in Estonia nobody who was against the government could find protection from the law.

One of the two most atrocious mass murders was committed on Saaremaa Island, the biggest island of the West-Estonian Archipel-

Two horrible massacres: the punitive expedition against the people of Saaremaa and the murder of the trade union leaders. The cause of both massacres was the people's struggle for peace.

ago, where, on February 16, 1919, the population refused to fight against Soviet Russia. According to the data made public by the commander of the punitive forces, 141 people were killed in suppressing the resistance. The victims of the other mass murder were trade-unionists. On August 31, 1919, 102 of the most active trade-unionists were arrested and sent to Irboska (Izborsk) railway station near Pskov. 25 of them were shot, the others were made to run towards the Red Army positions that were under the fire of an armoured train. Fortunately no fire was opened from the positions of the Red Army, and so they all could cross the front line safely.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Army comments on the shooting.

Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian army Laidoner said later in Parliament: "There would have been nothing out of the ordinary if somebody's direct order had been disobeyed and all the 102 people had been shot. From the military point of view, there is nothing peculiar in it. I must say that I fully approve of the shooting of those people. If Estonia happens to make war in future, similar occurrences will take place again."

In answer to the massacre, the working people of Tallinn went on a protest strike, in which all the workers of the larger factories took part. The wide public of Finland, the Scandinavian countries and England expressed deepest indignation about the crime perpetrated by the Estonian authorities.

To sum up what has been said above, it must be noted that at the turn of 1918 merciless terror was established in Estonia. It was the terror of the bourgeois Provisional Government against all the Communists, against everybody who supported Soviet power as well as against everybody with leftist ideas. However, such a regime of violence was established only after the English warships appeared at the roadsteads and foreign

mercenaries started arriving to protect the bourgeois government of Tallinn.

How the Entente formed an army in order to attack Soviet Russia.

After such drastic steps, as a result of which up to 2,000 human lives were destroyed according to incomplete data (it is impossible to establish the exact number since no accounts were kept regarding the people shot without trial), the Provisional Government succeeded in forcibly mobilizing about twenty thousand soldiers.

The Estonian Provisional Government gave this army to the disposal of the Western Powers, who, together with Russian monarchists and German troops, launched an offensive against Soviet Russia in the Baltic area in the early summer of 1919.

WHO WAGED THE WAR IN THE BALTIC AREA IN 1919

On December 14, 1918, A. N. Morris, the US Ambassador in Sweden, reported to Washington: the Baltic provinces and Finland were the most suitable territories for a war against Bolshevism. The Entente must take over the most important ports and towns of the Baltic provinces.

UNTIL the end of the 1930s Estonian historical references attempted to show the war of November 22, 1918 — December 31, 1919 against Soviet Russia as a national war of the Estonian Republic, a "war of independence". The émigrés who have found shelter in the Western countries stick to the same "historical conception" nowadays.

However, in the interests of the truth it must be noted that even the contemporary circles of Estonian political émigrés, who repeat the old arguments of the official history, ascribe to themselves the honour that belongs to entirely different historical personages, in the hope that the wide public will never learn about the particulars.

The reason is quite obvious: a political émigré needs a political halo. He needs a justification for his existence.

In the myth of the Estonian war of "national independence", the most ignored fact is that the 1919 war in the Baltic area was merely a part of the military intervention of the great powers of the Entente against Soviet Russia. It has been said that the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 would have accomplished its task in half the time, if the Entente had not taken a stand against Soviet Russia.

The military operations in the Baltic area and the attacks launched from here took place

simultaneously and were in full accord with Admiral Kolchak's offensive from Siberia, General Denikin's offensive from South Russia, as well as with the actions of the Polish and Rumanian troops, as well as those of Great Britain and monarchist Russia operating in North Russia. It was an iron belt around Soviet Russia which had to crush the young Soviet state.

How did it happen that the Baltic area became a military springboard for the Entente?

Decisions are made in London and Paris.

The decision to turn it into a battlefield was made long before the beginning of military operations. At first the idea was expressed in the standpoints of the commanders-in-chief and heads of the governments of the Western powers. It is known that already before the capitulation of Germany, Marshal F. Foch, Commander-in-Chief of the Entente armies, and General H. Wilson, Commander-in-Chief of the British army, had come to an agreement that it was imperative to conclude an armistice with Germany and to end the war in the West in order to use the disen-

US President W. Wilson (left of R. Poincaré, the French head of state) arrives in Paris. The anti-Soviet war of intervention reaches its culmination.

British Prime Minister Lloyd George declares in the House of Commons in January 1919 that the adversaries of the Bolsheviks formed their army on British advice and with British money.

gaged military forces against the Soviet power in Russia. It was also agreed upon that the military forces of the former enemy, Germany, would be used for this purpose. A little later another standpoint was added: the anti-Soviet war should be waged with the help of the outlying districts (i. e. the frontier provinces of Russia).

On November 8, 1918, Marshal Foch presented the terms of the armistice. The armistice was signed on the 11th of November. Its Article 12 stipulated that the German occupation army must not leave the Baltic area without permission of the Entente authorities. On the strength of Article 16, the Entente authorities reserved for themselves free access to all the Soviet territories occupied by the Germans.

Marshal Foch's plan for defeating Soviet Russia.

The Entente authorities put their stakes on German troops in the Baltic area.

President W. Wilson of the United States was in Paris at the time. The "delegation of peace" led by him stated in a report to the US Senate that German military forces were stationed in the Baltic area with full consent and at the orders of the Entente, and that in order to maintain the anti-Bolshevist *cordon sanitaire* it was permissible to keep a German army of 60,000 in Latvia and Lithuania.

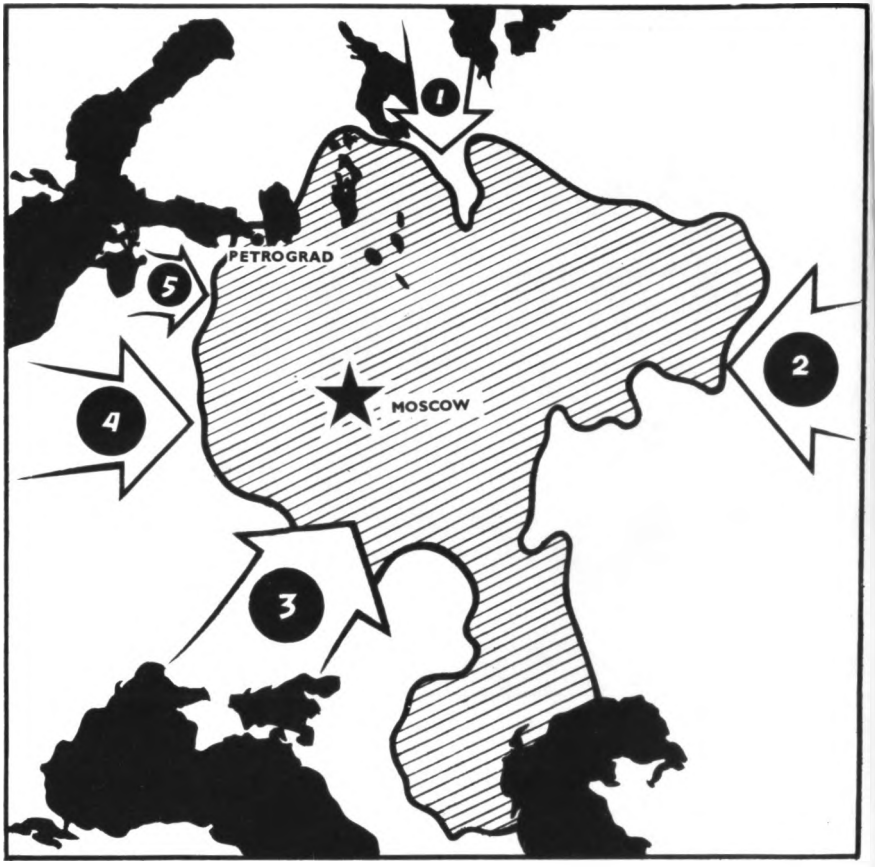
After that the US Secretary of State R. Lansing asserted in his statement that, on the ground of the Armistice, the Entente governments were Germany's allies in the Baltic provinces. British Foreign Secretary A. J. Balfour stated that the German army was staying in the Baltic area to fight against the Bolsheviks with the complete approval of the Entente.

On December 21, a British Navy squadron arrived at the roadstead of the capital of Latvia, Riga. Its commanding officer Admiral Sinclair had also instructions for the German troops. Sinclair summoned A. Winnig, the chief representative of the German

Marshal F. Foch (marked with a cross), Chief Commander of the Entente, in the Compiègne forest in front of the carriage in which the Armistice with Germany was signed on November 11, 1918. According to the conditions of the Armistice, the Germans were obliged to leave their troops in the Baltic countries, to fight against Soviet power.

Government in the Baltic area, together with representatives of the German Army Command. He reminded them that, according to the Armistice of November 11, 1918, the German Army was to stay in the Baltic area and continue fighting. The Germans were instructed to reconquer the territories abandoned in the course of the retreat.

It was an official order for military operations in the Baltic area. When A. Winnig protested that the carrying out of these orders would result in a mutiny in the German army, Sinclair replied that the Germans were obliged to execute the Entente's orders or else they would be punished.



Soviet Russia in the belt of the Entente's military intervention in 1919. The figures on the arrows, depicting the direction of offensive point out: 1. The British Expedition Corps and the monarchist forces of General E. Miller in Arkhangelsk (in the North of Russia). 2. Admiral A. Kolchak's 300 000-strong monarchist forces, aided by the USA and Japan in Siberia. 3. General A. Denikin's over 300 000-strong monarchist forces, armed by the Entente. 4. The Polish front which consisted of Polish and Russian monarchist troops and the so-called "Haller Army" from France. 5. The Baltic front armed forces commanded by General R. von der Goltz, General N. Yudenich, Colonel P. Bermondt-Avalov together with the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian armies. This front was supplied with armaments by the United States and British governments.

Here is another fact of interest. On February 25, Marshal Foch presented his plan for conquering Soviet Russia to the Council of the Ten of the Paris Peace Conference. He asserted that in order to keep all the conquered territories, large numbers of specially organized troops would be necessary, and that the end in view would be achieved with the help of the armies that could be formed in Eastern Europe on the spot. Subjected to a common high command, these armies would form a united front sufficient for occupying Soviet Russia.

Marshal Foch's plan was approved of. The opinion of Britain's Foreign Secretary Balfour is recorded in the minutes of the Council of the Ten as follows: as regards Marshal Foch's plans for mobilizing the Finns, Estonians, Poles, Rumanians and Greeks of the whole Eastern Europe and forming a large anti-Bolshevist army of them, there can be no objections to it.

Thus we should now have clarity on three points. Firstly, the war against Soviet Russia was pre-determined before the Provisional Government of Estonia started to mobilize an army for it. Secondly, the war in the Baltic area was waged by the German occupation army, which was here at the order of the Entente. That army, by the way, also fought the first battles in Estonia. And, thirdly, when the Germans finally withdrew from Estonia and Latvia (for some time they remained only on the western coast of Latvia, near the ports), the Estonian Provisional Government had to take over the local frontline.

Attempts have been made to label the war as "defensive" on the part of Estonia, if only because the Soviet army was the first to take the offensive. But what right was there to keep the Soviets from coming back to their

F. Bouillon, Chief of the Foreign Commission of the French Parliament in 1918, claimed that in the nearest future Tallinn and Odessa would be the capitals of Russia.

This meant that these two towns were to be the centres of anti-Soviet intervention.

In December 1918, British Prime Minister Lloyd George told President W. Wilson that it was not clear to what extent Estonia and Poland were invaded by Bolshevik ideas or had Bolshevik mentality.

Colonel S. G. Tallents, head of the British military mission in Estonia in 1919. He co-ordinated the operations of the Russian, Estonian and German military units and the British fighting forces aimed at the conquest of Petrograd.

Who ought to command the troops in the Baltic countries?

An Entente general or military counsellors?

The British fleet on the Baltic Sea lost 10 cruisers, submarines and several smaller vessels during the four months of battles with Soviet naval forces. The "Daily Herald" of October 27, 1919, wrote that this fleet was to make the exhausted Baltic provinces fight for the interests of the Entente.

own country? The Soviet aim was to re-establish here the Soviet regime that had been rooted out by the army of General von Seckendorff in March and April, 1918. There was no need for the Soviet authorities to take into consideration that the German occupants had in the meanwhile ceded the civil power to the Provisional Government of the Estonian bourgeoisie; that manoeuvre was merely a deal between the conquerors and the usurpers of legitimate power.

The Provisional Government of Estonia and the Estonian army were by no means an independent factor in the local battlefield, as we shall soon see. Not only the army mobilized by the Provisional Government, but also the Russian monarchist troops, the Baltic German units and mercenaries from abroad fought here. Besides, the Provisional Government itself had offered high command to the Entente authorities.

On December 27, 1918, when the Estonian Diet asked Great Britain to take Estonia under her protectorate, it was also requested that the Estonian army be subjected to the British military command. On January 6, Estonia's Government was informed, through the Russian White Guards, of the Entente's decision that command of all the anti-Soviet armies would be given "to a person suggested by the Allies". The Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian army replied with a declaration that "high command should be given to a general named by the Allies . . . It would be most suitable if the high command were assumed by the English, French or American authorities, i. e. by the countries that are taking an active part in the struggle against Bolshevism." In the first days of January, British Admiral Sinclair suggested that a British commander and his headquarters should be sent here to assume high command. True

enough, the Entente did not appoint its commanding officer for the Baltic area after all, since it was decided to give the control over that area to military missions.

Admiral Sinclair, commander of the British squadron operating on the Baltic, had been directing the operations of the warships and landing parties in the Gulf of Finland and on the coast. For the period of time between January 6 and December 15, 1919, he was relieved by British Rear-Admiral W. H. Cowan. In the spring of 1919, Lieutenant-Colonel S. G. Tallents was appointed head of a 40-strong British military committee in the Baltic provinces, and Lieutenant-Colonel C. H. C. Pirie Gordon became his deputy; British Consul General in the Baltic provinces was V. H. C. Bosanquet.

On February 10, US Secretary of State Lansing suggested to the President to send a US mission to the Baltic provinces and Lithuania. On March 12, Lieutenant-Colonel W. Greene was appointed head of the mission. Estonia's Foreign Minister learned about the news by chance, and informed his Government on March 26. On April 16, a part of the mission headed by Commander J. Gade reached Tallinn; Greene remained in Riga. Deputy head of the mission, Lieutenant-Colonel E. J. Dawley, wrote from Tallinn on June 22 that the task of his Government and local authorities was to "begin an active and aggressive campaign in order to crush Bolshevism". On May 4, Greene wrote to his superiors in Paris: "The situation in Estonia calls for an immediate action on the part of the Allies and America." If nothing were undertaken, Estonia would be certain to fall into the hands of the Bolsheviks. On July 5, he added that if the Entente did not act with sufficient energy in the Baltic provinces, they would lose an opportunity of clearing the

R. Lansing, Secretary of State of the U.S.A. in the government of President W. Wilson.

In his politics concerning the Baltic area, the German troops in these countries were his greatest allies. His attitude towards the independence of the Baltic countries was absolutely negative.

The Supreme Council of the Entente appoints a special committee in order to supervise the activities at the Baltic front.

provinces of Bolshevism and conquering Petrograd. His aspiration was an effective control over the local military forces.

From November 1919 till January 1920 Brigadier-General S. A. Cheney acted as head of the US military mission in the Baltic provinces. The French Government was represented by a military mission under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel R. Hurstel; in September General Etievant arrived in Estonia, as well.

Before the summer attack on Petrograd, the Entente governments began to reinforce and co-ordinate the command of the anti-Soviet war.

According to a decision of the Supreme Council of the Entente, a so-called Baltic Commission was formed on April 16, and on May 9 still another special military commission for directing the war in the Baltic area. The second commission consisted of representatives of all the great powers of the Entente. The United States were represented by H. Hoover (future president) and Admiral Benson, Great Britain by M. Seydoux and Admiral de Bon, Italy by Admiral Grassi, and others. Since the attack on Petrograd had begun on May 13, the military commission decided that a competent mission led by a lieutenant-general or major-general should be organized under British command.

Lieutenant-General (H. de la Poer) Gough, a veteran of the Boer War and fighter against the liberation movement in North Ireland, commanded one-third of the British Army in Europe. He came to the Baltic countries as a powerful emissary of the military command of the Entente.

On June 4, the commander of the British general staff Wilson informed Lieutenant-General Hubert Gough, who had commanded one-third of the imperial army in Europe at the German front, that the latter had been appointed head of the military mission in Finland and in the Baltic provinces. The mission consisted of 42 officers and it was to "advise" Estonian authorities in all military matters. In some documents more exact terms are used instead of "advise". General Gough did not

General H. de la Poer Gough (second from left) together with British, monarchist Russian and Estonian officers in the front-headquarters during the summer offensive in 1919.

give advice, he gave orders and demanded that these be obeyed. They applied not only to military operations but also to internal affairs.

According to a provisional agreement between the Entente governments, Gough was to direct all the anti-Soviet activities on the Baltic front; soon, however, he had a disagreement with the Head of the US mission Greene.

Already on June12, the US representatives in Paris had decided that the subjection of Greene's mission to Gough was not expedient. Greene proposed that the military operations in Estonia and on the Petrograd front should be conducted by Great Britain, and those in Latvia and Lithuania — by the US military mission. Soon, however, he insisted that Finland, Petrograd, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania

First signs of the rivalry of the U.S.A. and British interests in the Baltic countries.

and other non-Bolshevist districts of West Russia" should come under the jurisdiction of his mission.

At times the differences between the British and US high-rank officers with regard to the right to command in the Baltic provinces became quite acute and formed the background for serious conflicts. In autumn 1919, during a new attempt to seize Petrograd, General A. Niessel, the French representative in the former Russian tsarist army, was appointed head of the mission instead of Gough. The new members of the mission were: Brigadier-General Turner, representing Great Britain, Cheney, representing the United States, Marietti, representing Italy, and Commandant Tokado, representing Japan. All the military representatives of the Entente powers were subordinated to the mission. As a matter of course, neither entrance nor sojourn permits were obtained for the new command from the local governments. On October 28, it was declared with full conviction at a meeting of the Supreme Council of the Entente that the commission was "higher than, and practically ruled instead of, the local governments".

After the intervention H. de la Poer Gough made a scandalous statement to the effect that the Entente had forced the Baltic countries to continue the war against the Bolsheviks and had mercilessly ordered them about (New Statesman, 1920, Vol. XVI, No. 352).

PULLING CHESTNUTS OUT OF THE FIRE FOR THE ENTENTE

IT WAS thus that the circles who had seized power in Estonia involved their country and people in war. Estonia had become a military base for the Western powers, first for former imperial Germany, and then for its conquerors, the Entente governments.

Beginning of the Civil War.

In order to get a clear view of the military operations, one must divide them at least into four stages. The first stage would include the period from November 22, 1918, to the end of January, 1919. In the hostilities of this period one side was represented at first by the German army of occupation and later by the Estonian bourgeoisie, the working people of Estonia and its Red Army units together with the Latvian "Red Riflemen" and Russian units making up the other side. This was the most clear-cut period of the civil war, in the course of which the bourgeois forces ran the risk of being completely destroyed. Later, however, as a result of the Entente military intervention, almost the whole territory of Estonia was reoccupied by the Provisional Government in Tallinn. This happened already at the time when intervention was being prepared against Soviet Russia from the Baltic States.

The preponderance of the white army (the Estonian, German and Russian troops, more than 12,000 men in total) over the red troops (7,000 men).

Under these circumstances there was little hope at the Estonian front (to which the military leaders of the Entente attached great

At the turn of 1918/1919, big troops of German, Russian, Finnish and other mercenaries fought in Estonia and Latvia on the white side. All together, they outstripped the local white troops more than ten-fold. The Baltic Sea and its perts were under the control of the British Fleet.

importance) of turning the scales in favour of the re-establishment of Soviet power in Estonia. In the first place, Soviet Russia had to fight in the Urals, in Siberia and on the Southern fronts, from where the armies of Russian counter-revolutionary generals equipped by the Entente were advancing on Moscow.

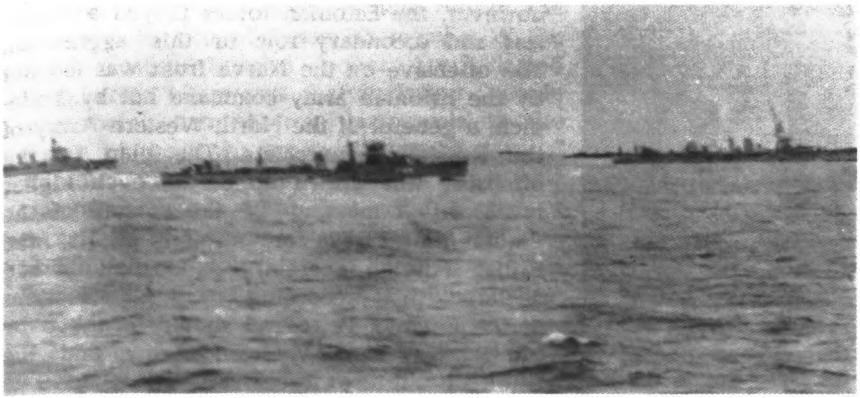
At the beginning of 1919, the Soviet Estonian Republic lost most of its territory. Somewhat later its government declared that its activities were being terminated. It was already in February, however, that Soviet Russia offered the Estonian bourgeois government an opportunity of ending all military operations. This offer was made in connection with the plan to convene the so-called Princes' Islands Peace Conference to which Soviet Russia invited the governments of its western border areas, including Estonia. This meant a peace offer. The conference was called off, however, mainly because of the opposition of the French government.

Peace-offers are rejected. Bullitt's mission.

Hungary offers mediation.

Another draft peace treaty was drawn up in Moscow on March 12 by the government of Soviet Russia and Mr. Bullitt, politician, who did not, however, represent the US government. According to this draft, all the actual governments of the former Russian Empire and Finland would maintain full power over these territories. The Tallinn Provisional Government knew about this draft, but was unwilling to support Moscow's proposal. In the meantime the military staffs of the Entente countries began transporting large quantities of military equipment to the Baltic States. At the same time the circles connected with the Paris Peace Conference warned Estonia that if she intended to conclude peace, she would forfeit all assistance.

Meanwhile, further peace offers were made. In a radiogram, the Hungarian government



12 British cruisers, 20 destroyers, an aircraft carrier, 12 submarines and many other naval vessels took part in the autumn offensive on Petrograd.

announced its willingness to act as a mediator in peace talks between Estonia and Soviet Russia. A few weeks later, however, the Estonian prime minister issued a statement announcing that the Estonian government would not conclude a separate peace with Soviet Russia without the participation of the Entente powers.

This announcement was made on May 12, 1919, and it served as an official confirmation that the bourgeois Estonian government considered itself an ally of the Entente in its war of intervention against Soviet Russia. The Estonian people had no reason whatever to continue such an absurd war. Thus the fact of the matter was that the Estonian bourgeoisie obligingly agreed to obey the orders of the Entente and to shed the blood of its people in the interests of others.

On May 13, 1919, the Russian monarchist general Yudenich and the command of the Estonian bourgeois army simultaneously ordered their units to attack Petrograd.

Bourgeois historical sources have sought to depict this campaign also as part of an Estonian "war of independence". At the same time,

German general Count von der Goltz was in the Baltic countries in 1918—1919 by warrant of the Higher Council of the Entente. Formally he was subjected to the US military mission and commanded the troops of the Russian monarchists, Baltic Germans and Latvians. Before his coming to the Baltic countries, his expedition corps destroyed the Workers' Republic in Finland.

however, the Estonian forces played a thankless and secondary role in this aggression. The offensive on the Narva front was led not by the Estonian army command but by Yudenich, a general of the North-Western Army of the Russian monarchists. The plan for the offensive was drawn up on an even higher level. At a meeting of the council of the Entente ministers for foreign affairs, the British Foreign Secretary A. J. Balfour had declared that, according to the instructions of the Entente, Petrograd should be taken by the Russian North-Western Army and the Estonian military forces. At the same time the German military units under Count von der Goltz went into action in Courland in Western Latvia. It is known that the meeting of the Entente ministers for foreign affairs on May 9 gave this Prussian general orders to take the Latvian capital Riga. The operation was supported by the British navy. Somewhat later two Americans, Morison, a member of the Baltic Commission at the Paris Peace Conference, and Colonel Carlson admitted that in Riga several thousands of defenseless people had been killed by the German authorities and that "4,000 to 5,000 victims were being detained in prison under the most appalling conditions". In June, 1919, the head of the French military mission Colonel du Parquet claimed that 50—60 people were being shot every day without lawful sentence. In the August number of the journal "Contemporary Review" the total number of those killed was estimated at 6,000, while executions were said to be still continuing.

Hence the second period of hostilities had begun. By May 29, the military forces launched from Estonia had reached Gatchina, a town at the approaches of Petrograd. Pskov was taken. What the Germans had done in Riga with the help and approval of the Entente,

General Yudenich's army leaders did in the occupied districts of Russia. A member of the North-Western Russian "government" named Gorn wrote afterwards that in Pskov "people were being hanged from lamp-posts in the centre of the town practically every day..." Another "minister" Bogdanov wrote in his memoirs: "People were shot without trial or investigation, prisons were packed full..." Yudenich was not ashamed to mention that his officers engaged in robbery and counterfeiting.

The path of the anti-Bolshevik "crusade" was paved with political mass murders.

This was the actual essence of the war waged for the "liberation" of the local peoples.

The offensive to take Petrograd was destined to fail from the very beginning. To begin with, Finland, who was to support the attack from the north, did not take part in the offensive. Finland assumed a temporizing position as it was clear that the re-establishment of the old regime in Russia would have meant the loss of its own independence. The Estonian politicians were not so much alarmed by this alternative. At the same time, nevertheless, the army was not willing to fight together with the Russian monarchists for the return of Great-Russian oppression. The inhabitants of the Russian districts rose against their "liberators". Mass desertions to the Soviet side became more frequent in General Yudenich's army.

As a result of a counter-attack launched by the Red Army on June 21, 1919, the whole "invincible common front", on the supplying of which the Entente had spent enormous sums of money, collapsed. By August the invaders had been beaten back to the line from which they had launched their offensive, and the government of Soviet Russia made new peace offers.

An official proposal came on August 31. Due to the censor's oversight a report of this

General N. Yudenich, first pawn of the Entente in their plans towards seizing Petrograd. The offensives organized by him were financed by the Entente.

Cipher Telegram

British Consul General 28/6
Helsingfors

Will you please transmit following Cipher Telegram to General Gough:-

H|Q|No 7 Reval 3rd July. Cipher. General Laidoner wishes to ask General Gough if shipment of stores asked for in his letter of 23rd June Number 23621 may be hastened from London. In connection with the long list of stores already submitted as required by Esthonians, the following are now of first importance, and are most urgently required, namely:- Sixty million rounds Ammunition for Russian Rifles, one hundred thousand pairs of boots, one thousand tons of Gasoline for motors one hundred tons of kerosine for aeroplanes, ten thousand rifles twenty four British 18 pounder guns, Seventy five thousand (eighteen-pounder) shells, sixteen aeroplanes, twenty five armoured cars, fifty thousand military overcoats. He understands that these have already been ordered, and the Esthonian Ship KILLIND left here a fortnight ago for London especially to load this Cargo. At present the petrol supply for motors is only sufficient to last one more week. Will you please take action and inform me result, for my Communication to General Laidoner.

BRITMIS
REVAL

MILITARY MISSION
ESTHONIA
BALTIC STATES
3. 7. 1919.

Copy to General Laidoner for information

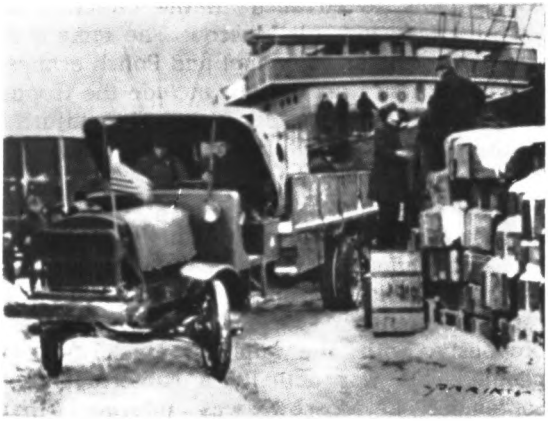
The needs of the Baltic campaign were met by the Entente. The British military mission presents the list of supplies for J. Laidoner's troops. The original of the telegram.

appeared in the newspapers. Soon the governments of the Western powers received the following signal of distress from their local agents: "The Estonian authorities are alarmed because they cannot keep their people in check any longer unless peace is concluded with the Bolsheviks."

Still the fear of being deprived of the support of the Entente powers was greater than the fear of the people... The Entente had planned a new campaign in order to take Petrograd. On September 9, Gough's assistant Lieutenant-Colonel Herapath sent Laidoner the following letter: "General Gough expects you to concentrate your military forces in time to take part in the general offensive as has been agreed." Laidoner answered on the same day: "Please inform General Gough that the Estonian army has been fully prepared to launch an offensive if required." On the same day Rink, head of the Intelligence Service of the Estonian General Staff, went to Riga together with a British officer, Brigadier-General Burt. On September 10—13, the Estonian prime minister and the army chief of staff joined them. At the meeting the formation of a joint

Date of a new offensive appointed.

Ultimatum to Soviet Russia.



The port of Tallinn in the spring of 1919. Trucks with American flags carrying supplies from the United States. A considerable part of the consignment proved unserviceable. Members of the military missions were trading with these goods of inferior quality.

Front sections appointed to the Baltic troops by a British General.

F. G. Marsh was responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the troops in the Baltic countries.

For his merits he was awarded the highest order of Estonia — the Cross of Independence.

high command for the three Baltic Republics was discussed. At a conference held in Tallinn on September 14—15, it was decided to demand that the Red Army should withdraw its military forces east of the Krasnaya Gorka —Malaya Luga line and that the navy should be placed under the control of a "neutral state". This meant an ultimatum. Certain circles (in Paris, Tallinn and Riga) were close to megalomania.

The sectors of the front had already been allotted to the Baltic military forces. This can be seen from an order issued by General Marsh, deputy head of the Allied military mission, according to which the Estonians were to participate in the general offensive from the Gulf of Finland to the Yamburg—Gatchina railway, their main objective being Petrograd, and also at the approaches to Pskov and in Eastern Latvia (from the Velikaya River to Lake Luban). The forces of General Yudenich (under Dessino) were assigned an intermediate sector between the fronts mentioned above. The Latvians were instructed to keep the frontline from the Baltic Sea to the Eastern front. South of the Latvians the army of the Russian monarchist Bermondt-Avalov was to advance in the direction of Velikiye Luki towards Moscow. The same task was given to the Lithuanian and Polish armies. General Marsh's list did not include the troops of General Count von der Goltz. The majority of these forces were placed under Bermondt-Avalov's high command.

The government of Tallinn makes a manoeuvre.

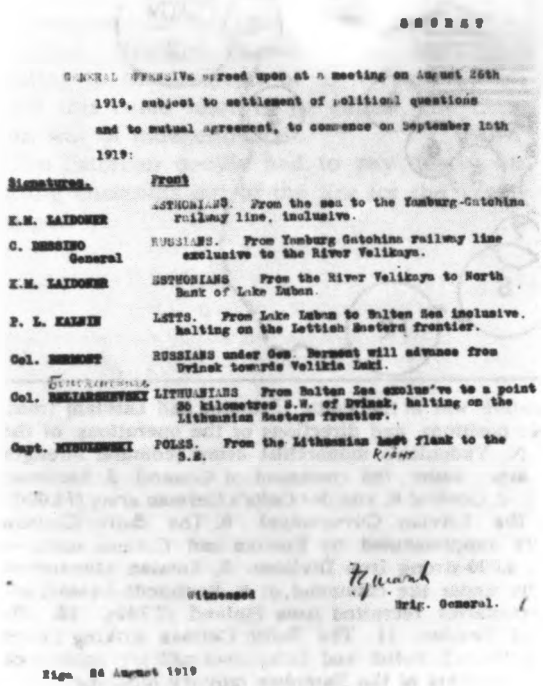
Such were the orders given at the end of August, 1919. The Estonian high command had also announced its preparedness. At the same time the government sought to show a certain readiness for peace negotiations, obviously with the aim of appeasing its people. This was actually a subterfuge. On September 4, Moscow was informed that

Estonian representatives would come to Pskov for peace talks. The Entente governments were told, however, that the talks had been agreed to merely to gain time. The meeting with the Soviet representatives took place, but as could be expected, it was a failure as acceptance of the demands made to the Soviet state would have been tantamount to capitulation.

At the same time, another general offensive of the Entente against the Soviet state was in full swing. General Denikin's army was approaching Moscow from Southern Russia. On September 28, an offensive was launched on the Pskov front, and on October 10 a general offensive was started against Petro-

Second campaign against Petrograd.

The Estonian front section consisted of 56,000 men of white guard Russians and 5,000 men of the Estonian Government's armed forces. 31,000 men on the Red Army's counter-attack.



GENERAL OFFENSIVE agreed upon at a meeting on August 26th 1919, subject to settlement of political questions and to mutual agreement, to commence on September 15th 1919:

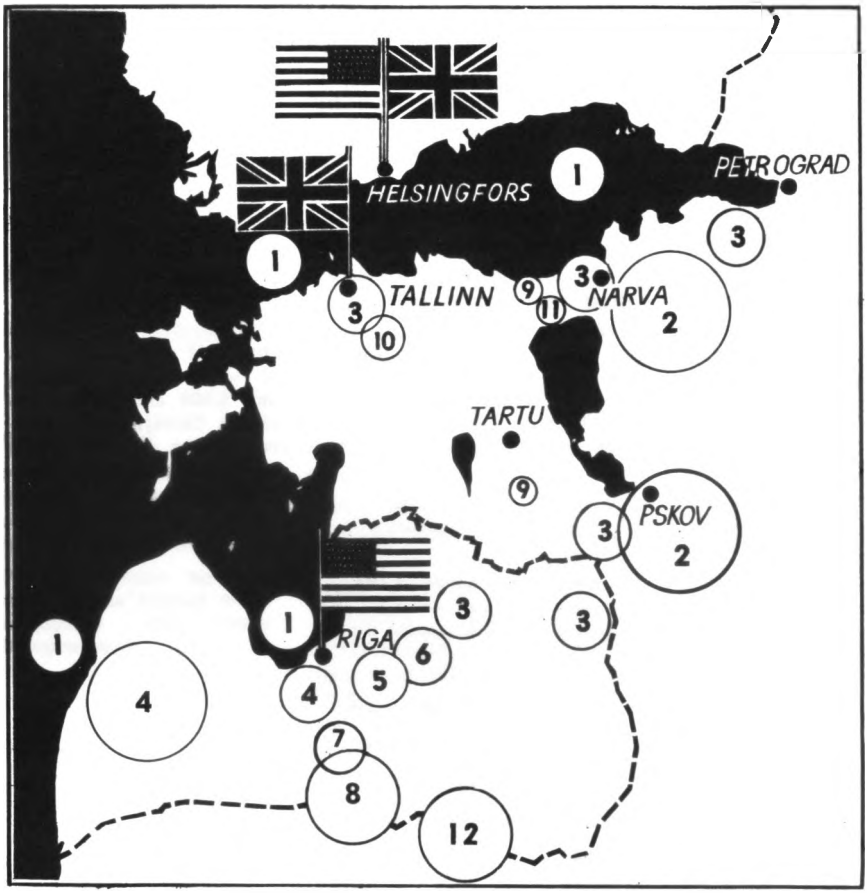
Signatures.	Front
K.M. LAIDONER	ESTHONIANS. From the sea to the Yamburg-Gatchina railway line, inclusive.
C. RODZIKO General	RUSSIANS. From Yamburg Gatchina railway line exclusive to the River Velikaya.
K.M. LAIDONER	ESTHONIANS From the River Velikaya to North Bank of Lake Luban.
P. K. KALNIN	LETTS. From Lake Luban to Baltic Sea inclusive, halting on the Lettish Eastern frontier.
Col. BERMONT	RUSSIANS under Gen. Bermont will advance from Dvinsk towards Velikia Luki.
Col. BELIAKIEWICZ	LITHUANIANS From Baltic Sea exclusive to a point 30 kilometres S.W. of Dvinsk, halting on the Lithuanian Eastern frontier.
Capt. MIELESZKO	POLES. From the Lithuanian left flank to the S.E.

Witnessed

Brig. General.

Riga 26 August 1919

On August 26, 1919, British General F. G. Marsh appointed certain sections of the front to the commanders of the troops in the Baltic provinces. It was a preparation for the autumn attack against Soviet Russia.
The original of the order.



The participants in the intervention war at the Baltic (Estonian and Latvian) front. The figures show: 1. The basic positions and directions of the operations of the British men-of-war. 2. General N. Yudenich's monarchist army (nominal strength 140,000 men). 3. The Estonian army under the command of General J. Laidoner (nominal strength 81,000 men). 4. General R. von der Goltz's German army (73,000). 5. The 30,000-strong army of the Latvian Government. 6. The Baltic German Landeswehr (3,500), temporarily supplemented by Russian and German units — ca 10,000 men. 7. The German 4,000-strong Iron Division. 8. Russian Monarchist soldiers and German mercenaries under the command of P. Bermondt-Avalov, not more than 50,000 men. 9. Mercenaries recruited from Finland (2,700). 10. 400 mercenaries from Denmark and Sweden. 11. The Baltic German striking forces (the "Baltic Battalion") — ca 1,000. 12. Polish and Lithuanian military units — ca 20, 000. The flags mark the headquarters of the Entente's military missions.

grad. The forces of the intervention reached the Krasnaya Gorka fortress. On October 21, however, the Red Army launched a counter-attack from the approaches of Petrograd. The situation of a few months before repeated itself. The troops that had been sent out for a "victorious campaign" suffered heavy losses and retreated to their initial position.

Although hostilities continued, it was already possible to state more or less definitely that the establishment of a military base in Estonia for the Western powers and the launching of two campaigns at their will cost the Estonian people more than 4,000 soldiers killed in battle and more than 10,000 wounded. In addition to these casualties, thousands of people had been executed with or without sentence by courts-martial.

Moreover, Estonia had to pay for all the munition, although the Estonians had been fighting in the interests of their "supporters".

All this came later to be called "the Estonian war of independence".

The Estonian people had to pay dearly for pulling chestnuts out of the fire for the Western powers.

YOU HAVE BEEN DECEIVED!

AT THE TIME when Estonian troops were being dispatched to take part in the storming of Petrograd, the Communist Party issued a proclamation entitled "To the Working People of Estonia". It read: "You have been shamefully deceived, workers and agricultural labourers of Estonia. You were told that the Entente would recognize Estonian independence as soon as the Red forces were driven out of Estonia. Now the fighting has been going on for seven months. The Red forces have been expelled not only from Estonia and almost the whole of Latvia, but also from Yamburg, Oudova and Pskov. But — the end of the war is not yet in sight, and the capitalist governments of the Entente have turned down the demand for independence . . ."

"The Achilles' heel" of the Estonian Government. The people wanted to know whether the war was waged to restore the Russian Empire.

This statement was not merely an expression of the grim truth; it laid bare the heel of Achilles of the men who then stood at the helm of the Estonian state. In 1919, Estonian independence not only failed to win a single gesture of recognition; it lost even that temporary and limited form of recognition that it had gained in the previous year.

Was there any international recognition of Estonia in 1919?

A number of West-European works on International Law testify to the fact that, in May, 1918, the governments of England, France and Italy had already granted *de facto* recognition to the Republic of Estonia and its

government. Actually, it is a little too much to say that. When approached with the request to recognize the Provisional Government of Estonia, the British Foreign Office replied (May 3, 1918) that His Majesty's Government was prepared to grant temporary recognition to the Estonian National Council as a factually independent institution, but only until the peace conference was convened. Poincaré, the French President, asked his Foreign Minister Pichon (on May 14) how it was possible to recognize the Estonian state, which had not yet come into existence. Pichon justified the recognition of the Estonian Diet on the grounds that this would encourage the Estonian people, then languishing under the yoke of the German occupation. Yet at the time of this "recognition" no Diet existed, not even in exile. The message sent by the British Foreign Office makes no mention of either the Estonian *state* or the Estonian *government*. In fact, this letter was of importance on only one occasion. In January 1919, at the time of the armed intervention against the Soviets, when the Estonian Republic already existed in fact, a British court acknowledged the right of the Estonian government to set up a prize court, — in other words the right to retain possession of any property of the Soviet government seized as spoils of war (in this case the ship "Gagara").

In all other questions the Estonian government was never treated by the Entente powers as a legitimately constituted government in the years 1918—1920.

The premises of the Estonian legation in London were rented by a private person, and its members, who were not granted diplomatic status, were addressed as private persons. At the same time the British, French and American representatives in Esto-

The name of A. J. Balfour, British Foreign Secretary, has been connected with the recognition of the Estonian Republic. Original documents, however, do not corroborate the fact.
On May 9, 1919, the Foreign Secretary denied the validity of the *de facto* recognition of Estonia.

The basic document of the provisional *de facto* recognition — the letter of the British representative in Stockholm was not signed, and neither was the statehood nor the government of Estonia recognized in it.
The original.

MEMORANDUM

His Britannic Majesty's Minister is authorised to inform Mr. Tönisson, representative of the provisional Council of the delegates of Esthonia, that His Majesty's Government are prepared provisionally to recognise the Constituent Assembly as a de facto independent body, until the peace congress takes place, when the future status of Esthonia ought to be settled on the principle of self-determination. His Majesty's Government will not recognise any settlement which is contrary to this principle.

BRITISH LEGATION STOCKHOLM

British Legation,
Stockholm.
20th March, 1919.

Monsieur Tönisson,
Hôtel Regina,
Stockholm.

Political discrimination of the Baltic countries.
At the demand of the US President, the fate of Estonia and Latvia was made part of the "Russian problem".

nia were regarded as attached to the Russian city of Reval (Tallinn). No foreign states were prepared to receive Estonian consuls. The United States refused right of entry to all persons who arrived as representatives of Estonia in the US. The Estonian passports of Estonian representatives abroad were valueless as credentials, with the result that the majority were forced to establish their identity with the help of passports issued by Soviet Russia or the Finnish Workers' Republic. Naturally they were not invited to the Paris (or Versailles) Peace Conference. They were admitted

4

FOREIGN OFFICE,

(71866/W/28). May 3rd, 1918.

Gentlemen:-

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter enclosing a memorandum on the political situation of Esthonia, and asking for recognition from His Majesty's Government.

It gave me much pleasure to receive your recent visit, and I take this opportunity of assuring you that His Majesty's Government greet with sympathy the aspirations of the Esthonian people and are glad to reaffirm their readiness to grant provisional recognition to the Esthonian National Council as a de facto independent body, until the Peace Conference takes place, when the future status of Esthonia ought to be settled as far as possible in accordance with the wishes of the population. It would obviously be impossible for His Majesty's Government at the present time to guarantee to Esthonia the right to participate at the Peace Conference, but at any such Conference His Majesty's Government will do their utmost to ensure that the above principle is applied to Esthonia.

In the meantime His Majesty's Government will be glad to receive Professor Antonius Piip as the informal diplomatic

E. Virgo, Esq.,
A. Piip, Esq.,
E. Poots, Esq.,
Cranston's Kenilworth Hotel,
Great Russell Street,
W.C.1.

diplomatic representative of the Esthonian Provisional Government.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your most obedient,
humble Servant,

Arthur James Balfour

The explanation of the British Foreign Office concerning the *de facto* recognition.
The original of the letter.

R. Lansing, US Secretary of State, refused to receive the leader of the Estonian Provisional Government K. Päts in the spring of 1919. The reason given was that the United States considered Estonia a part of Russia and did not recognize any separate government.

for a short time to only one session of the Baltic Commission, where the representatives of Estonia were allowed to put their case. But at the same time they were informed that the status of Estonia could not be determined without the approval of the Kolchak government in Russia.

It may be added, in parentheses, that from November 19, 1918, to November, 1921, the Estonian government concluded only seven international treaties — all with Soviet Russia, and that representatives of Estonia attended an international conference as equal partners for the first time at the Estonian — Soviet Russian Peace Conference, held at Tartu in December, 1920.

In the official documents of the organs of the Entente during the period in question (1918—1920) there is no mention of the Estonian or Latvian states; they are referred to as the "Baltic provinces", or as the "regions of Estonia, Livonia and Courland". A survey of the British War Office drawn up in 1920 is entitled "Courland, Livonia and Estonia".

The question now arises: why did the western countries so stubbornly refuse to recognize the independence of the Estonian state, or even to refer to it as such, although there could have been no doubt of its existence in fact?

Why the Paris Peace Conference did not take the recognition of the Baltic states on its agenda.

The answer to this question is not far to seek. The Entente and the Paris Peace Conference sitting at Versailles were at that time straining every nerve to overthrow the Soviet power in Russia. In so far as they hoped to "restore" the tsarist empire in all its pristine glory, Russia in their eyes was to remain — as it had been in the past — "one and indivisible". From this point of view there was obviously no point in encouraging the aspirations to independence of such provinces as Estonia or Latvia, and none of the powers

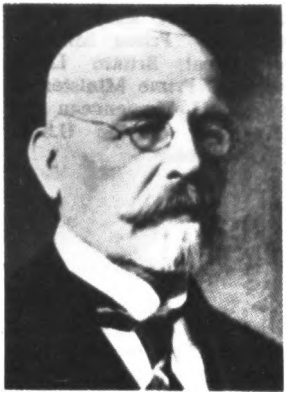
"The big four" of the Paris peace talks. Prime Minister of Italy V. E. Orlando, Prime Minister of Great Britain Lloyd George, Prime Minister of France G. Clemenceau and President of the U.S.A. W. Wilson.

concerned was prepared to bind its own hands with irksome promises to that effect. The formula of the British Foreign Office — the *de facto* recognition of the Estonian Diet until the peace conference was convened — was typical in the sense that it entailed no obligations of any kind. Besides, the Estonian Diet ceased to exist from the moment when the Estonian Constitutional Assembly *(Eesti Asutav Kogu)* was elected in April, 1919. If the circles of the Entente carried on any business at all with the governments of Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania, they did so only to the extent that they were forced to do so by the requirements of the war they were then waging against Soviet Russia. If they had had to deal not with a "government" but, say, with the office of a provincial governor or commissar, their attitude would have been precisely the same. The name stood for nothing; what counted was merely the loyalty of the local agency to the policy of the Western powers.

And yet, the ruling circles in Estonia continued to hope that if they faithfully performed all that was required of them, their government might yet be rewarded, on some suitable occasion, with some form of international recognition.

"Political salon" in Paris. Estonia's Foreign Minister is not allowed to take part in the Peace Conference.

In this hope the Estonian government sent to Paris a delegation of seven members, headed by the Foreign Minister J. Poska, who had served as the Commissar of the Estonian *Gubernia* in 1917. The delegation had been urged to contact the leading figures of the peace conference, but inasmuch as it proved impossible to make contacts at this level, a so-called "political salon" was set up with the object of sounding the entourage. Unfortunately no important contacts were made. The Estonian Foreign Minister was never given a chance to approach even the British and American delegates, let alone the heads of state. His request that the Estonian delegation should be allowed to put its case to the peace conference was simply ignored and his letters to the representatives of the great powers were not even answered. Poska, as leader of the delegation, was soon forced to the following bitter conclusion:



J. Poska, the representative of the Estonian Government in Paris, asked W. Wilson to apply the right to self-determination for the Baltic people. He got no answer to his request.

"Judging from everything that is to be heard or learnt at the peace conference, one might assume that two motive forces reign supreme: brute strength and self-interest. All the lofty ideals of humanity are either forgotten or thrown into the waste-paper basket. I am firmly convinced that nobody at the conference talks any longer about the self-determination of nations, or, if they do, it is only in a derisive manner."

This was a fair description of the true state of affairs.

On May 26, 1919, the President of the United States, the heads of the British, French and Italian governments and the representa-

tive of Japan appended their signatures to a document in which Admiral Kolchak's government in Siberia was declared to be the government of all Russia. The tsarist empire was to be restored and Estonia was a part of it. In Kolchak's reply to the governments of the Entente, dated June 4, he failed to guarantee either the independence of Finland or the autonomy of Estonia. And this in spite of the fact that the Baltic German aristocracy had long enjoyed a considerable measure of local autonomy within the framework of the tsarist regime. In other words, Estonia was to remain a mere province or *gubernia,* and no more.

Final decision of the Entente: the status of Estonia will be decided by the All-Russian government.

The most determined opponents of the right of the Baltic peoples to self-determination were the United States. The American representatives in the Baltic not only consistently ignored the new national states that had sprung into being, but even refused to mention them by name. Thus, the leader of the American Military Mission in the Baltic Provinces, Lt.-Col. W. Greene, proposed that his organization should be renamad "The American Mission in Western Russia, with jurisdiction over Finland, Petrograd, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and other non-Bolshevik areas in West Russia." On August 5, Greene added that "the supply of military support to the territorial armies in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania may be regarded as part of the agreement between the Allied and Associated Governments and Admiral Kolchak."

Admiral A. Kolchak, leader of the Russian government in Siberia. Having got the recognition as the "Commander of Russia" from the Paris Peace Conference, he began to demand the integrity of Russia according to her earlier frontiers.

Of this new trend of affairs, according to which the authority of the Kolchak government was extended to the whole former territory of tsarist Russia, the Estonian Foreign Minister learned quite by chance from the newspapers of June 13. Certainly there had been grounds for apprehending such a development. But at least some measure of auton-

The Baltic peoples are represented by a Baltic baron. Estonia's Foreign Minister from Paris: "The indifference of the Entente towards us is intolerable". "The United States are said to be in favour of the self-determination of the small nations, but at the same time they won't hear of their independence".

omy had been hoped for. The Estonian and Latvian peoples had not been consulted. But the representative of the Baltic-German aristocracy, Baron Meyendorff had been invited to make a statement before the Baltic Commission in Paris.

In this statement he declared that "the Baltic Germans have assured Admiral Kolchak of their desire not to secede from Russia. They have no faith in the capacity for survival of frontier states." The Estonian capitalist class, realizing that the Kolchak government placed its trust in the landed gentry rather than in the industrial circles, as the former Russian Provisional Government had done, attempted to protest. On June 19, a fresh letter was addressed to the chairman of the Peace Conference, warning the negotiators that the publication of the decision to recognize Kolchak would call forth a sharp reaction in the sympathies of the Estonian public, which would no longer be prepared to prosecute the war for the restoration of the tsarist empire. Already on July 13, Poska expressed his fears that the Estonian front might collapse as a result of the recognition of Kolchak.

On July 16, Poska disappointedly left Paris.

Admiral Kolchak's orders to the Vice-Regent of the Baltic countries.

At this time the Western powers were making frantic new endeavours to destroy the Soviet regime in Russia. The countries of the Entente overestimated the capacities of the generals of imperial Russia, while the latter were overconfident of their own strength. On the very day following the announcement of the recognition of his government, Admiral Kolchak ordered General Yudenich, who was then in Helsinki, to assume command of the General Staff Headquarters of all the land and sea forces in the Baltic region. Yudenich was also required, in the name of the Commander-in-Chief of the

Russian army (i. e. Kolchak himself), to take over the administration of all those *gubernias* that should be occupied by his forces. "For this reason," — so ran the instructions of Kolchak, the "Russian Commander-in-Chief" — "you must not tolerate the formation of any new governments on the territory entrusted to you." This was the reason why Yudenich deliberately refrained from applying for a visa of entry from the Estonian authorities when he travelled via Tallinn to Narva in order to take up his post as Chief of Staff of the North-Western Army. When in Tallinn, Yudenich made no attempt to present himself to the Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian armed forces. On the contrary, the latter was obliged to wait for an interview with Yudenich until a number of other functionaries had been received. The representatives of the Entente also treated Yudenich as the supreme commander of all the troops stationed in North-Western Russia, thereby implying that the head of the Estonian army was subordinated to him.

A plot to liquidate the Estonian government was discovered. The Russian monarchist troops in Latvia were ready to occupy Tallinn together with General Yudenich's and Baltic-German troops.

It will be readily understood that this attitude was the source of considerable friction, which was further aggravated by the intrigues of the Russian monarchists and the Baltic Germans against the Estonian bourgeois government. On one occasion a message from Prince Lieven in Latvia to the Russian monarchists on the Petrograd front fell by chance into the hands of the Estonian government. Lieven had sent his representative to Yudenich's staff by air. Owing to a mechanical defect, however, the plane made a forced landing at Narva, and, since relations between the "allies" were already somewhat strained, its occupants were searched. A letter came to light containing the words: "Perhaps it is high time to put an end to the anecdote about the political independence of the Baltic area —

Political intrigues between the military missions of the Entente and the intervention forces in the Baltic countries.

Yudenich had better go to Tallinn and put his foot down." There could be no doubt that this was, in effect, an invitation to overthrow the Estonian bourgeois government as had already been done with the government of Latvia. The dispersal of the latter and its replacement with a government of Baltic Germans had been carried out with the approval of the Military Mission of the United States, which had been directly involved in the manoeuvre.

Although all this conformed perfectly to the plans and political conceptions of the Entente, it nevertheless entailed the danger that what had begun as a mere difference of opinion might develop into a serious rift between the "allies", a rift that threatened to jeopardise the whole course of the offensive against Petrograd.

General Gough, the head of the Military Mission of the Entente, hastened to salvage what remained of the wreck. Realizing that the Estonian front might fall to pieces if no recognition of any shape or form were offered, the British general took into his own hands the task of correcting the "error" made at the Paris Peace Conference.

The mediation of General H. de la Poer Gough proved fruitless.

The first step taken by General Gough was to order Yudenich, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armed forces, to recognize personally the independence of Estonia. Although the head of an army has no right to grant recognition to new states or governments, and, if he did so, such recognition would have no juridical validity whatever, Yudenich dispatched an answering letter to the effect that the required recognition would come into effect with the seizure of Petrograd, but that the Estonian forces must play their part in the campaign under his command. The Estonian government retorted that such "recognition" was valueless.

V 1, 20.

To the Esthonian Government (Minister for Foreign Affairs)

Lieut-General Sir Hubert Gough. G.C.B.G, K.C.B. etc, etc, has received your notes dated 11th August 1919 addressed to Brigadier-General F. G. Marsh C.M.G, D.S.O.

1. He welcomes your assurance that the Esthonian Government is prepared to extend every support possible to the newly-formed Russian North West Government and expects that you will give instructions to your Commander-in-Chief to proceed at once to discuss details of cooperation with General Yudenich and to put the plan, decided upon, into immediate operation. He prefers at the present moment not to state his apprehensions as to what will happen if these expectations of his are not realised.

2. The Russian North West Government, formed of a coalition of members of various parties, presents herewith through its Prime and Foreign Minister, Mr Lianozov, a note to you simultaneously with a note to the representatives in Reval of the United States of America France and GreatBritain. Colonel Pirrie-Gordon who represents the British Foreign Office is representing your claims to recognition of absolute independence. I have already assured you of my warmest sympathy and again assure you of its continuance, provided you give also your support to the political as well as to the military aspirations of this new democracy in North West Russia.

3. My representative Brig. Gen. Marsh is returning to my General Headquarters on August 14th, and although I recognise that you will not have had time by then to give me a formal reply, I beg you to realise that I expect a favourable agreement to be arrived at between you and the Russian Government at a very early date.

F. G. Marsh. Br. Gen.for,
Lt.General Sir Hubert Gough.
Chief of Allied Military Mission , Finland,
Baltic States of N.W. Russia.

ReVAL.
13th August 1919.

British General F. G. Marsh orders the Chief Commander of the Estonian Army to go to the Russian monarchist General Yudenich to discuss collaboration. The original of the letter sent to the Government.

British General Marsh forms one more government in Estonia. A farce with the North-Western puppet government — the government was formed in order to sign the fictitious "declaration of recognition". Political manoeuvres to continue the war.

At this point General Marsh, Gough's deputy at headquarters, stepped into the arena, where — it must be admitted — he displayed a genuinely soldier-like firmness of character. The whole story, as reported in the official Estonian bourgeois publication "The Estonian War of Liberation 1918—1920" *("Eesti Vabadussõda 1918—1920")*, runs as follows: "On the tenth of August General F. Marsh invited the leading Russian public figures to attend on him. In the presence of representatives of the French, British and American missions, he made the following statement to his dumbfounded guests: "The Allies are persuaded of the necessity of forming a government of North-Western Russia. This must be done on the spot, before you leave this room. It is now 6. 15 p.m. I will give you till 7 o'clock, when the representatives of the Estonian government will appear in order to conduct negotiations with the new government to be formed. If you fail to reach an agreement, we — the Allies — shall be obliged to abandon you to your fate." Perhaps we should add that, according to some white-guard sources, the order given was to form not a "government of North-Western Russia", but a "government of the North-Western Region".

The British Military Mission took the initiative in organizing the "Russian political conference" in Tallinn.

The Russians themselves declared that "most of the persons invited heard of the meeting for the first time an hour before it was due to begin, whereas the members of the Political Advisory Council hurried straight to the meeting from the Helsinki steamer." Some were picked up at their homes and driven to the meeting-place in a British Mission car. No one knew what questions were to be brought up for discussion. After the meeting was opened, Marsh distributed copies of a project for the appointment of the "ministers" concerned and announced that the Allies would be

gratified if the persons listed should be appointed to the government. It was this "newly-born government" that was to sign the declaration of Estonian independence.

The Supreme Council of the Entente sticks to its standpoint.

On the following day only one member of the "government" appended his signature to the declaration of recognition, which was drawn up in faulty Russian. This was the "prime minister", Lianozov, one of the biggest oil proprietors in tsarist Russia. All the rest declined. In spite of this failure, Gough continued his efforts to persuade the Supreme Council of the Entente that, if the Estonian government was not recognized, the entire North-Western Russian Army would be inevitably doomed to destruction. But Paris, unmoved by his appeals, remained opposed to the recognition of Estonia.

Tallinn — capital of two governments.

Thus the local "initiative" of the Western military mission also came to nothing. Perhaps the most tragi-comic aspect of the whole situation was the fact that the "Lianozov government", that had been called into existence so despotically, was seated in Tallinn, cheek by jowl with the Estonian government itself. The Russian monarchists did not even allow it to cross the Narva river on to Russian territory.

But this situation was not destined to last for ever. Before long, the shattered forces of the Russian monarchists, or rather the remnants of them, began to roll back over the Estonian border. Both the North-Western Army and the "North-Western government" passed out of existence.

Yet another attempt to abuse the slogan of the self-determination of nations had come to an ignominious end.

THE PROBLEM OF DIVIDING UP THE BALTIC AREA

The secret agreements of the Entente concerning the division of the world.

THE CAUSE of the First World War was, as is known, the struggle for the redivision of conquered territories and spheres of influence. The plans of the Entente — mainly England, France and Russia — for the partition of the territories of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey had been formulated in the secret treaties of 1915. These treaties were made public by the government of Soviet Russia. The whole question of the schemes for the redivision of the world at that time and the attitude of the victors with regard to the defeated falls beyond the scope of the present work. But it may be stated in passing that England, France and the U. S. A. (who were aware of the existence of the secret treaties when they entered the war in 1917) had consented to the seizure of a substantial part of Turkey — the Dardanelles — by tsarist Russia and to her participation in the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary and Germany. This state of affairs lasted right up to the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in 1917.

A secret plan in case it would not be possible to destroy the Bolsheviks. It was a suggestion of the US State Department that the Baltic countries, Byelorussia, Siberia and the Caucasus should be separated from Russia and divided between the great powers.

Soviet Russia, however, renounced all claims to annex conquered territories and exposed the expansionist plans of Russia's former allies. The latter now unhesitatingly turned the full force of their war machine against the first workers' state in the world, while at the same time they began to draw

British Prime Minister Lloyd George on a hunting trip to Scotland between sessions of the Paris Peace Conference.

up plans for the partition of Soviet Russia. True, these plans existed for the time being only on paper.

Although, according to the decision of the Paris Peace Conference, the Baltic area was to remain "a province of the restored Russian state", a number of other projects were drawn up to meet the situations that might arise should it eventually prove impossible to achieve the full restoration of the tsarist Empire. The wildest schemes were circulating in Paris. In view of the unfathomable and unscrupulous character widely attributed to the Bolshevist regime, it was felt that the greater part of Russia should be converted into mandate territories and placed under the jurisdiction of the Western powers.

The Baltic Sea placed within the British sphere of influence.

The Anglo-French treaty of December 1917 placed the Baltic Sea within the sphere of British influence. In the following year plans of a more detailed nature were elaborated.

This period was marked by the birth of the so-called "mandate system". At a meeting of

the British cabinet held on November 20, 1918, the suggestion was made that some of the German colonies should be handed over to the United States, the prime minister Lloyd George remarking that such a measure would help to dispel the suspicions of annexationism that clung to the war aims of the Allies. The British general Smuts was still franker in his treatment of the problem: in his opinion, the mandate territories should be granted a status similar to those of the British colonies and protectorates. No time limits were set and no provisions were made for the eventual expiration of the mandates themselves.

The Baltic countries are taken into the U.S.A. project as mandatory countries of the League of Nations.

Mandatory countries of the League of Nations: the territories whose people were not considered capable of ruling themselves (art. 22, § 1) and were "given under the tutelage of the developed countries" (§2).

As early as December 18, 1918, Smuts proposed that the victorious Allies should be given mandatory powers not only over the possessions of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey, but also over the frontier regions of the former tsarist Empire. In this connection D. Miller, one of President Wilson's closest associates at the Paris Peace Conference, wrote that Smuts's proposals deeply impressed the President, adding that they meant the intervention of the whole world in Russia. On February 8, 1919, when the article on mandates in the Covenant of the League of Nations was discussed, Wilson suggested that this conception should be extended to cover certain territories that had formerly been part of the Russian Empire. As may be seen from documents of the State Department, as well as from the commentaries on Wilson's "fourteen points" drawn up at his own request, the territories in question might be regarded as including Russian Central Asia, the Caucasus, Armenia, White Russia (Byelorussia), Siberia, the lower reaches of the Volga, the Crimea, and, lastly, the Baltic countries.

At this point we may discuss rather more closely the proposals made with regard to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. They were

formulated in a speech delivered on June 17, 1919, by Col. W. Greene, head of the American Military Mission in the Baltic provinces. Baron Meyendorff, representative of the Baltic-German aristocracy, had already been allowed to state his views on the situation that was now crystallizing, and to express the demands of his group. Greene, however, in conformity with Wilson's policy, now made the proposal that Great Britain and the United States should assume full mandatory powers over those regions. His report, entitled "The Recommendation of the Head of the American Mission in the Baltic Provinces", was forwarded on June 30 to the American delegation at the Peace Conference, which was presided over by President Wilson in person. It received the formal approval of the latter on July 11, and was then submitted to the Senate of the United States. This version of the report also contained the proposal that Great Britain and the United States should be granted mandatory powers over the Baltic provinces and Lithuania. Further, it was declared that Estonia should fall within the sphere of activity of the British Military Mission, while Latvia and Lithuania should belong to that of the United States. On May 3, i. e. a full month before Gough was appointed Head of the Military Mission that was to be responsible for carrying out the policy of the Entente in Estonia, Greene announced that K. Päts, the former Estonian prime minister, had approached him with the request that the Allies should provide Estonia with an American governor-general invested with the powers analogous to those possessed by the British governor-general in Egypt! The latter, as everybody knew, was actually the real ruler of the country. Greene naturally was careful not to reject this proposal out of hand, but submitted it to the consideration of his government.

The head of the U.S.A. Military Mission dividing the Baltic provinces.
In greater detail see also: 66th Congress. 1st Session. Senate document No. 105. The Baltic Provinces. Washington, 1919. See also: Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. The Paris Peace Conference of 1919, XII.

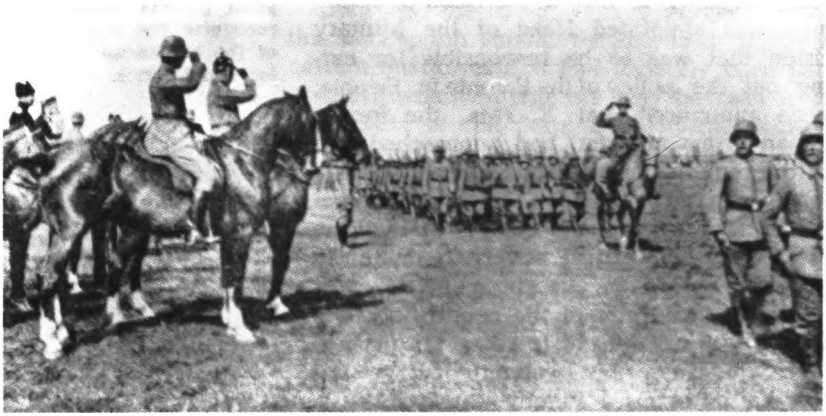
D. Miller, US President's counsellor at the Paris Peace Conference, said in January 1919 that the great powers would not recognize the sovereignty of the territories suitable for mandatories.

The interests of the U.S.A. and Great Britain in dividing the Baltic countries clashed. Lieutenant-Colonel W. Greene presents his pretentions.

Here we must make a digression in order to gain a clearer picture of certain British and American aims in the Baltic region, and of the conflicting interests to which they led.

We need not speculate on the emotions which the proposal of the leader of the Estonian war party must have aroused in Greene. But we must assume that the idea of inviting an American governor to take charge of the Baltic area must have appeared to him, to say the least, a highly attractive one. Greene had, in fact, already had experience of this form of "tutelage". In May, 1919, the German troops retained in the Baltic on the basis of the armistice signed at Compiègne had stormed Riga, and it had been Greene himself who appointed the German Baron von Engelhardt Commandant of the city. The latter perpetrated a frightful massacre, for which he undoubtedly shared joint responsibility with an American officer, Lt.-Col. E. J. Dawley, Greene's aide, whom Greene had similarly appointed Governor-General of Riga. The new American governor and Baron von Engelhardt, together with the Prussian Count General von

Count Rüdiger von der Goltz, general of the German mercenaries, receiving the parade of his troops in Latvia after the occupation of Riga. The operations of his troops were directed by the U.S.A. Military Mission.



der Goltz, were clearly unanimous in their views concerning the measures that needed to be applied for the "extirpation of Bolshevism"; and Greene himself, as the head of the American Military Mission, must have fully shared their opinions, as he did not lift a finger to prevent the indiscriminate massacre of innocent people, including women and children.

W. Greene approved of the German campaign against the Estonian troops.

Having thus settled with Riga — "the Red Capital" — the German troops operating in Latvia under the command of Count von der Goltz next proceeded to move against the positions occupied by the forces of the Estonian bourgeois government in the north of Latvia. Marching northwards, the so-called Baltic Landeswehr, which was composed almost entirely of Germans, came into conflict with the Estonian troops and a brief, but bitterly contested clash ensued, in which no prisoners were taken on either side. In the eyes of the Estonian soldiers the attack of the Landeswehr was an attempt to reduce Estonia once more to the status of a German colony and to restore the power of the Baltic-German aristocracy. Nor can it be denied that such a danger existed in fact, and that it sprang directly from the American policy in the Baltic area.

Commander of the German troops was Baron W. Engelhardt, who was responsible for the massacres in Riga.

Who supported the U.S.A. policy in the Baltic area?

Indeed, in 1919, the chief opponent of the independence of the Baltic states was precisely the US government. The Americans pinned their faith, above all, on the German troops stationed in the Baltic, which they regarded as better able to assist them in their plans for the eradication of the Soviet regime than the governments of the Baltic bourgeois republics. The only local forces recognized in Washington and by the American delegation to the Paris Peace Conference were those of the Russian monarchists under Yudenich and the army of General von der Goltz. The Americans

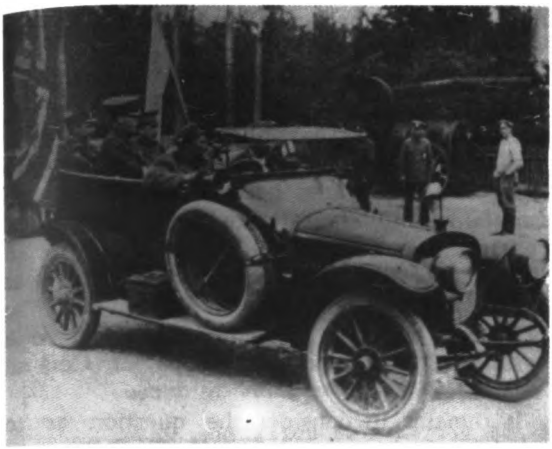
maintained that the most competent and advanced social stratum in the area was that of the Baltic Germans and insisted on the preservation of the huge estates formerly owned by the barons. But it was precisely at this time, in the summer of 1919, that the Estonian government had placed upon the agenda a new statute providing for the confiscation of the manors, hoping by this means to reduce the restlessness of the troops dispatched against Soviet Russia.

Already in April, 1919, Greene had given von der Goltz a free hand to overthrow the Latvian bourgeois government. The German general wasted no time. He organized a "lightning coup d'état", deposed the Ulmanis government (which was not only friendly towards the British, but had even gone so far as to raise the question of curtailing the German estates), and replaced it with a pro-German puppet government. The Estonian representative in Latvia hastened to warn his government that plans were already being hatched for a similar intervention in Estonia.

The Landeswehr War. The Landeswehr troops were formed in Latvia at the end of 1918. The soldiers were Russians, Baltic-Germans and Latvians. There were about 40 per cent of officers in these troops. For the offensive against Estonia, the Landeswehr was supplemented by the German Iron Division, making a total of 10,000 men.

It can hardly be doubted that the German advance from Riga in the direction of Estonia and the resulting Landeswehr conflict served similar aims. At any rate Greene, as head of the American Mission, demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Estonian troops and, when the armed clash took place, presented the Estonian government with an ultimatum, in which he threatened to cut off the military supplies furnished by the United States.

The incident of the "Landeswehr War" threw a sharp light on the contradictions between British and American policies in the Baltic. In answer to Greene's ultimatum, the British general Gough, as head of the Military Mission of the Entente, consented only to a cessation of hostilities, demanding at the same



This photo dates back to the days of the Estonian-German military conflict in 1919. Members of the military missions of the Entente "pacifying" Estonian soldiers. It happened, however, that the officers of the Entente had to flee for their lives.

time that the Ulmanis government should be reinstated in Latvia.

The differences of opinion between Greene and Gough were undoubtedly a reflection of the tense concealed struggles underlying the Paris Peace Conference and the intrigues to decide the fate of the Baltic. The combined forces of the Germans and the Russian monarchists would, of course, have made short work of the Estonian bourgeois republic and its government, and the resulting growth of German prestige in this part of Europe would have suited the Americans perfectly. But different views were held in England, where any strengthening of German influence was regarded as a blow to British prestige. For this reason General Gough was determined to prevent the German troops from getting out of hand and succeeded in forcing both the Germans and Greene himself to preserve the *status quo* in the balance of power.

The British Government did not agree with the growing German influence in the Baltic countries. The US mission was made to give up its plans concerning the Baltic area.

Besides, it was as yet by no means clear what the leaders of the Entente powers would finally decide to do with the Baltic region and

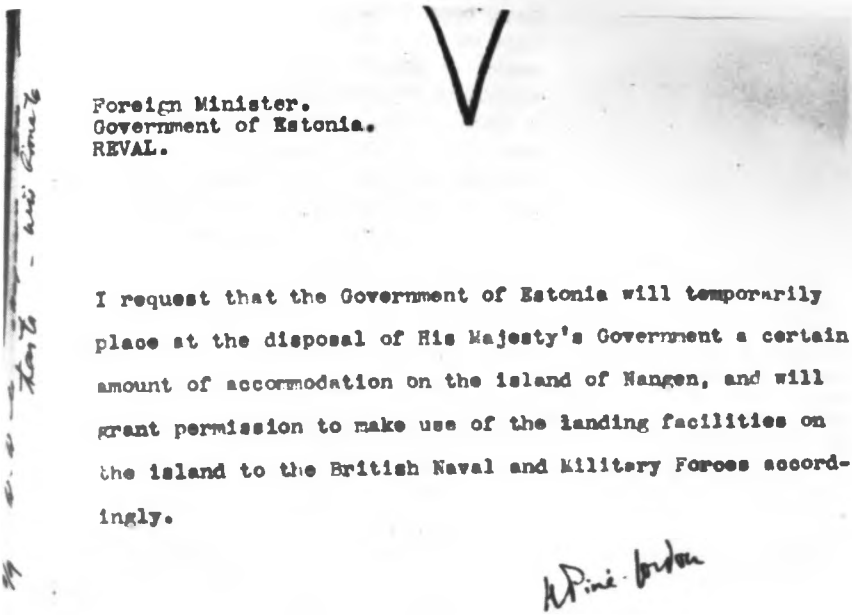
how the distribution of mandatory powers would finally take shape. Both England and the United States had their own ideas on the subject and, plunged in secrecy as they were, their plans could be only guessed at. As a result, the Allies had become — for the time being — rivals, and both were anxious to maintain a military force on which they could rely for the realization of their ambitions. In the case of the Americans such a force was preponderantly the German army; for the British it was the Estonian army, and, to a certain extent, also the troops of General Yudenich.

The U.S.A. plans concerning the destiny of the Baltic countries. In greater detail: Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. The Lansing Papers 1914 — 1920, II.

It remains to consider the question as to what might have happened if the Baltic area had been really shared out among the Allies in the form of mandates. The aims of the United States in this respect are known in detail. In 1919, Robins, the American representative in Paris, reported to Secretary of State Lansing that the Allies should adopt a course of action analogous to that followed by Germany in the Ukraine, Finland and the Baltic provinces (occupied by the Germans in 1918). This proposal was supported by Wilson himself.

The British project to turn Estonia into an "Eastern Gibraltar" did not come true, either.

As for the British, they hoped, as we know, to set up in Estonia a military base of the Gibraltar type. On January 22, 1919, they were offered the westernmost part of Saaremaa Island for the construction of a naval base, and, on March 19 and 20, the ice-free harbour of Paldiski. On June 22, the Estonian newspapers reported that a statement had appeared in the "Times" to the effect that the British fleet was to occupy the whole of Saaremaa (Estonia's largest island) and that British warships would be docked in the port of Tallinn. A couple of months later, on September 8, Lt.-Col. Charles H. C. Pirie Gordon, deputizing for the Commissar of the Baltic



Foreign Minister.
Government of Estonia.
REVAL.

I request that the Government of Estonia will temporarily place at the disposal of His Majesty's Government a certain amount of accommodation on the island of Nargen, and will grant permission to make use of the landing facilities on the island to the British Naval and Military Forces accordingly.

A Pine-Gordon

Lieut. Colonel.
Deputy Commissioner.
British Commission for
the Baltic Provinces.

REVAL. 8/9/19.

The British Government's claims upon Estonian territory. The construction of the military base was not realized since the Entente lost the war in this region.

Provinces appointed by the British government, addressed a note to the representatives of the Estonian government in which he demanded that the Island of Naissaar, which dominates the entrance to the Gulf of Finland and the Bay of Tallinn, should be placed at the disposition of the British fleet. In July, 1919, a British M. P., Park Goff, wrote in the London periodical "Estonian Review" that the chief Estonian port — Tallinn — should be handed over to the British. In this way, the Finnish capital Helsinki in the north and the Estonian capital Tallinn in the south could

have been used to control the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, in other words to seal the outlet of Soviet Russia to the Baltic Sea, and thence to Western Europe.

These plans, however, were not destined to bear fruit. The collapse of the war of intervention against Soviet Russia finally put an end to the dreams of converting the Baltic states into mandate territories of the Western powers.

ATTEMPTS TO DISALLOW PEACE

THE COMPLETE indifference of the Western Powers to Estonian national sovereignty clearly underlined the importance of the peace offers made by Soviet Russia. But to achieve peace it was necessary that the military operations of the Entente in Soviet Russia should suffer even more crushing defeats. It was also imperative that the local reactionary circles should fall into an ever greater isolation. It was necessary that the development of events should work against the forces of reaction.

And time worked in favour of ending the war in the Baltic countries. Several circumstances were conductive to this.

The people and the army knew about Soviet Russia's peace proposals. Although little was known about them, they were nevertheless known. Martial law forbade speaking about peace under penalty of death. Speaking about the Soviet proposals was regarded as "high treason", "subversion by the enemy", "destruction of the political system". However, the truth spread and it had concrete results.

The authorities of the "democratic republic" did everything possible to make the people continue the war of intervention necessary only to the Western powers. When strikes broke out in Tallinn factories in May 1919, the authorities unleashed a wave of repres-

In April, 1919, the Estonian Constituent Assembly was elected. The left wing got the majority, since they promised to start peace talks. Former prime minister K. Päts, who was defeated, declared that the war was to continue until the Bolsheviks would be overthrown in Russia.

The U.S.A. mission concerning anti-war moods in Estonia. See for greater detail: Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. The Paris Peace Conference 1919. XII.

sions. Trade union leaders were arrested. The trade union newspaper was suppressed. The army occupied the factories, and on July 1 all striking workers were called up, even those who did not undergo conscription. These measures, however, led to new strikes. There were disorders in a regiment at Tartu from July 10—13. On July 19, US Lieutenant-Colonel Dawley wrote that there had been a serious mutiny among the Estonian military units in Dorpat (Tartu), which resulted in 21 men being court-martialled and executed. He expressed satisfaction that the Estonian government and the military headquarters had dealt with the case in a very satisfactory way, adding, however, that the incident was not yet closed.

The terror continues. The beating to death of some recruits brought along serious protests in the Constituent Assembly. Commander-in-chief J. Laidoner replied: "Whenever another rebel should be found, we'll do the same."

However, in several cases the Entente sources refer to ministers even in the Estonian Government who were inclined to conclude peace. The Minister for Internal Affairs A. Oinas, a Social Democrat, is said to have been one of those who secretly met V. Kingissepp, the underground leader of the Communists, to learn from him about the peace terms of Soviet Russia. The case became known, and the minister had to resign. Foreign Minister J. Poska, who in 1919 had left Paris with a feeling of deep disappointment at the complete rejection of the aspirations of the Estonian bourgeois state, also made contacts with circles who might act as mediators with Soviet Russia.

Professor William Goode's mission.

One of those unofficial mediators was Professor William Goode, an Englishman, who had come to Tallinn at the invitation of J. Poska as a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*. Professor W. Goode crossed the front-line and went to Moscow where he met the leader of the Soviet government, V. I. Lenin. The meeting between them took place on August 20, 1919. Already six days later

English professor W. T. Goode (in plain clothes) was the mediator of the Estonian political circles in the peace-talks. In the picture he is seen together with the escorting officers before crossing the front-line.

when General Marsh in Riga was distributing sectors of the front between the Estonian, Russian, German, Latvian and Lithuanian commanders-in-chief for "another great military offensive on Petrograd", two civilians crossed the front-line from Soviet Russia and were quickly sent to J. Poska. One of them is known to have been an Estonian, A. Kink, a professor of Petrograd University. They brought a letter which said that Soviet Russia would not send its troops across the Estonian border, and which included a 14-point draft peace treaty, providing, among other things, for the recognition of the sovereignty of bourgeois Estonia.

The countermeasures of the Entente powers were resolute. They did not trust the some-

The Entente decided to put an end to peaceful contacts. The plan of the British Intelligence: to provoke workers' disturbances, establish military dictatorship and dissolve the Constituent Assembly.

what left-wing Estonian Government, and somewhere it was decided to change the course of events radically.

A prominent part in this was played by the British Assistant Commissar in the Baltic provinces, Charles H. C. Pirie Gordon, a British intelligence officer. A provocative plan to bring about disturbances in Estonia is believed to have been worked out by the Entente Military Mission. These disturbances were to be used as a pretext for dissolving the government and the Constituent Assembly and for handing over all power to the military. Thus it was planned to establish an open military dictatorship. The plan of the British intelligence service was, however, rather naive. Without knowing the local situation, Pirie Gordon made an attempt to buy over the trade union leaders so that they would bring out the Tallinn workers against the government. The British intelligence officer is reported to have said that the power should be given over to either J. Laidoner (the Commander-in-Chief) or K. Päts (the leader of the right-wingers).

O. Strandmann, the new leader of the government. Due to his demagogic promises concerning peace, he got into a conflict with the army command.

"The event itself corresponds to the facts," said Social Democrat A. Hellat, Minister for Internal Affairs of the government that was to be overthrown. "The leading part in it was played by a British officer . . ."

However, the provocation failed. The Estonian trade union leader A. Hannus made his talk with Pirie Gordon known to the Trade Union Congress convened a few days later. Yet bloodshed was not averted. Mention has already been made of the massacre of trade unionists. Minister for Internal Affairs A. Hellat, together with the military leaders, ordered the army to surround the building of the union congress under the pretext that the congress had passed a resolution demanding the conclusion of a peace treaty with Soviet

Russia. 102 trade union leaders were arrested and 25 of them shot, the acknowledged leader of the Estonian workers, A. Hannus, among them.

But soon Pirie Gordon came on the scene again, this time as an official spokesman of the British Foreign Office. He imparted the British government's demand that no steps should be taken to sign peace with the Bolsheviks, the British government would regret such an individual action and hoped that the Estonian government would pursue its foreign policy as until then — *only as part of the general plan adopted by the Allied governments.*

The British Government demands that the war be carried on. In greater detail: Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919—1939. III.

However, after the British Foreign Secretary G. N. Curzon had personally declared that His Majesty's Government regretted the independent action of Estonia, the government gave an official pledge from Tallinn that "Estonia had always followed its foreign policy in conformity with the views and intentions of the Entente", and that a peace or a truce would be signed only with the consent of the British Government.

The British Foreign Office declares: the front against the Bolsheviks must reach from North to South, with the participation of Finland, Estonia and Poland.

That is what the government thought. But the people continued their fight for peace.

The course of events was steadily strengthening the position of those opposed to the war. The dramatic end of the offensive on Petrograd that had been launched with much hullabaloo brought about general depression. There was no good news from the other fronts of the Entente, either. A general strike against the war broke out in Britain. Because of the protest movement of the people, the British troops left North Russia — Arkhangelsk on September 27, 1919 and Murmansk on October 12. Soon after that, Lloyd George said that Britain was not in a position to finance the tremendous expenses of the Rus-

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680/48

REVAL. 18th September 1919.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs.
Government of Estonia.
REVAL.

In conformity with your request, I have pleasure in repeating in writing the message communicated to you by me yesterday on behalf of His Britannic Majesty's Government.
His Britannic Majesty's Government requests that the Government of Estonia will take no action in the direction of peace with the Bolsheviks.
His Britannic Majesty's Government would deplore any such individual action and trusts that the Estonian Government will as heretofore conduct its foreign policy only as part of a plan concerted with the Allied Governments.
His Britannic Majesty's Government will however be happy to hear any suggestions which the Estonian Government may have to make on the present situation and will tender such advice as is in its power to offer.

C. Pirie-Gordon

Lieut. Colonel.
Deputy Commissioner.
British Commission for the Baltic Provinces.

Charles H. C. Pirie Gordon demanded the foreign policy of the Estonian Government to agree with that of the Entente. The original of the memorandum.

sian civil war about 100,000,000 pounds sterling having been spent on it already.

After shorter strikes, new anti-war demonstrations began on November 15 in all bigger factories and plants in Tallinn.

The political crisis deepened, being preceded by economic disruption and depreciation of the currency. The Labour and Social Assistance Minister admitted that the prices of the main foodstuffs had risen 25 times in comparison with 1913. The rate of the Estonian mark in relation to the dollar dropped to one-fifth from July 4 to November 20.

A major part in the development of the conditions which led to Estonia ceasing hostilities (despite all the efforts of the Entente powers) was played by the situation in the army. If the army does not want to fight, it can still less be used to maintain "law and order" among the people. Official reports to the army command at the end of 1919 said that the ever-increasing feeling of opposition among the soldiers was due to the dragging on of the war towards winter and the waging of war outside the territory of one's own country; a rise in the cost of living in the rear and the difficult economic conditions of those at home; the deterioration of relations between soldiers waiting for an end to the war and officers who had received a profit out of the war; the terror against workers, poor peasants and soldiers which showed that the government was acting against the majority of the people; the lavish aid given to the Russian monarchists of the North-Western Army by the Entente reminded one that General Yudenich's troops might some day occupy Estonia; the burning and looting of Russian villages by the monarchists (in which also some Estonian so-called "élite troops" were involved), which had a very depressing impact upon the Estonian peasant

Quotations from soldiers' letters, by the military censor: "If the government does not put an end to the war, we shall do it ourselves..."

"For whose benefit should the Estonians occupy Petrograd?"

And on October 31, the Estonian Division refused to go on an attack.

soldiers as such violence might easily have broken out also in Estonia. So the army wanted to return home to defend its hearth and families, and not to shed blood in order to take Petrograd. The army did not understand for whom they were to take the previous capital of Russia. If for the Russian monarchists, then they would establish the abolished autocratic regime also in Estonia! But in the name of what was the war to be continued at all?

Rumors concerning military advance at the front were empty talk. The war against Bolshevism was lost.

It was already in the summer of 1919, that the party of the previous prime minister K. Päts declared that "the evil which the coalition government of the majority parties had wanted to commit in its political infancy," that is, to seek peace, could still be rectified, and "an offensive on the front would help to save the state from destruction" as "under the joint blows of united forces Bolshevism would be destroyed by the time the Estonian Government managed to start making peace with it..." But it was clear in November that Bolshevism had not been destroyed, but was standing on the Estonian border, the troops of the Russian monarchists fleeing in panic back into Estonia.

On November 18, the government of J. Tõnisson, "the man with the iron fist", came to power.

The new Prime Minister broke the ban on peace talks.

The Estonian Government asked a delegation of Soviet Russia to come to Tartu for negotiations. The subject of the talks was a seemingly second-rate question — the exchange of war-prisoners. A pertinent treaty was signed on November 19, 1919. However, contact had been established, and now a rapid development began in the opposite direction — from war to peace.

The following are the most important stages in this development.

One of the most famous diplomats of Soviet Russia, M. Litvinov, arrived in Tartu to attend the talks on the exchange of prisoners of war. A certain part in his going to Estonia

was again played by a British journalist, Arthur Ransom, who, with the help of the Estonian Foreign Minister, was sent across the front-line to Moscow to spy the ground as had been done some time before by Professor W. Goode. The negotiations with M. Litvinov began on November 17. Two days later an agreement was signed.

Secret talks in Tallinn. The government acknowledges the necessity of concluding a peace treaty.

It was on November 20 that M. Litvinov was invited to Tallinn for confidential talks. An attempt was made to keep his stay in Tallinn secret, but it failed. Neither was it possible to conceal the aim of the visit. The Entente powers understood the talks to be preliminary peace negotiations, and this they actually were. J. Tõnisson, the leader of the oldest Estonian bourgeois party — the People's Party (*Rahvaerakond*) — who had just formed a new government, and M. Litvinov decided that the agreement on starting peace talks would be worded in writing but *would be subject to implementation without being signed.*

On December 5, 1919, the government sent a wire to Paris to the effect that the continuing of the war would cause a rebellion in the country. Due to the mood of the army and the economic ruin in the country, it was vital to make peace with Russia.

At a meeting of the government on November 19 when the first talks with M. Litvinov had come to and end, a bold decision was made in view of the circumstances: since the North-Western government of the monarchists had lost both its territory and military power, its stay on Estonian soil was undesirable and its activities here should be terminated!

Such a decision was unthinkable before the defeat of General Yudenich by the Red Army. With the defeat of the Russian monarchists, the Entente powers lost their earlier influence upon the development of events in Estonia. The influence had been based on the presence of the Russian monarchists and German mercenaries in the Baltic countries.

Another statement issued soon determined the fate of General Yudenich's army which had proved so costly for the Entente.

P. Berthelot, the representative of the French Foreign Ministry, informed the Estonian Government that in case the war were finished, Estonia would be treated as a Bolshevik territory.

The spokesmen of the British government confined themselves this time to oral statements that they would give Estonia a free hand in signing peace. As to the official representatives of the USA and France, the latter remained categorically opposed to any contacts with the Bolsheviks. The secretary of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berthelot, threatened Estonia with a blockade, and on December 17 he even sent the Estonian representative a relevant letter. In it Berthelot also demanded that General Yudenich's army be saved from ruin, and preparations for a new military offensive be started.

The Estonian Government asks once more for political recognition.

An alternative decision was passed at a meeting of the Estonian bourgeois government on December 19: to continue the war in case the Entente sends enough military equipment and recognizes bourgeois Estonia politically; or else, to respond favourably to the peace offers of the Soviet Government.

Recognition was not obtained.

The Armistice with Soviet Russia was signed by the Estonian government on December 31. 1919.

PEACE TREATY AND RECOGNITION

The agony of the 40,000-strong North-Western Army of Russia. The Entente abandoned the army that had been fighting at their command.

AFTER the Armistice, the Estonian Government did not hasten to conclude a peace treaty. The pressure from the Western powers was as strong as before, and the government wavered because of ceaseless warnings and threats. The Allied Command announced that a third anti-Bolshevik campaign would begin soon. When the Conference of the Baltic States started its work in Helsinki on January 15, 1920, the representatives of the Entente insisted that Estonia should not make peace with Russia. The organization of a fresh joint action on the part of the Baltic States against Soviet Russia was discussed at the Conference in detail, but this time it was nothing but talk since there was no longer anybody who wanted to fight. The army of General Yudenich had been routed under the very eyes of the people, and its so powerful guardians in Paris and Washington had undertaken nothing to relieve its agony.

A. Aavikko, a Finnish pastor who had been assigned to Yudenich's army, reported the following about what he saw there: "In January 1920, spotted and recurrent fever broke out among refugees. These two diseases played havoc with them and were the cause of the untimely death of thousands of soldiers of the Northern Army.[1] Only in Jaanilinn,

1 An earlier term; the later term is the North-Western Army.

a suburb of the town of Narva, 4,500 persons died, the total number of the dead in the whole town being about 14,000. What a terrible figure! The epidemic spread from the Northern Army stationed in Narva over the whole of East Estonia . . ."

As late as March 1, 1920, when thousands of soldiers of the North-Western Army had died, the number of the sick stood at 10,261. Those who had remained alive were doomed to starvation since no Entente country took an interest in them any longer.

The monarchist general departs on board a French man-of-war.

It was reported at the time that General Yudenich, commander of the perishing "Army", was "practising the proper pronunciation of French words." The general was namely making preparations to leave Estonia on board a French naval vessel.

On January 16, 1920, the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers decided to raise the blockade of Russia. The United States Administration announced that it intended to withdraw American forces from Siberia.

The Tartu Peace Treaty is concluded. Estonia promises not to let its territory be used against Soviet Russia.
French Foreign Minister A. Millerand: "The Entente washes its hands of the Estonian peace treaty."

The peace treaty was signed at Tartu on February 2, 1920, by the delegations of both governments. At long last this put an end to bloodshed. The Soviet Government firmly rejected the claims of the military circles of Estonia to Russian territories. Firm guarantees were demanded from the Estonian Government that it would never allow its territory to be used for military adventures against Soviet Russia. The Soviet Government, on its part, gave Estonia 15 million gold roubles to restore its economy.

The Soviet Government renounced all claims to former Russian property located on the territory of Estonia. The Estonian Government, in turn, renounced all possible claims resulting from the fact that Estonia had been part of the former Russian Empire. The treaty lay down that Estonia did not bear any re-

Peace at last! J. Poska, the leader of the Estonian peace delegation signing the peace treaty between Soviet Russia and Estonia.

sponsibility for the debts incurred by the former Russian Empire. All property that had been evacuated from Estonia to Russia was to be returned to Estonia. At the same time, Estonia was offered, under favourable conditions, several concessions in Soviet Russia and large trade orders (if these had been accepted, Estonia would have been able to make all its big factories work at full capacity). Likewise, Estonia was offered treaties providing for the transit of Soviet goods to foreign countries through Estonian ports.

J. Poska, head of the Estonian peace delegation, said in the Estonian Constituent Assembly on February 10, 1920, when the ratification of the peace treaty was under discussion, that the Governments of the Allied Powers had recognized the Government headed by Kolchak. In case Kolchak had won, i. e. if the military intervention of the Entente

against the Soviet State had succeeded, all the outlying regions of the Russian Empire would have had to ask the Supreme Ruler of Russia (as Kolchak called himself) to forgive them all their "sins and errors". In the same speech J. Poska pointed out: "We all know quite well that there is no political party in Russia, with the exception of the Bolsheviks, which would recognize the right of small nations to self-determination."

Opinions concerning the Tartu Peace Treaty:
J. Poska: "Victory over Soviet Russia would not have brought sovereignty to Estonia."

J. Tõnisson: "The Bolsheviks concluded the peace with us at a time when it was of minor importance to them, since their enemies had already lost the war."

G. Chicherin (Foreign Minister of Soviet Russia): "Every word uttered in Tartu had its echo on the banks of the Thames. Our peace treaty with Estonia became a dress rehearsal for finishing the war with the Entente."

Soviet Russia was the first to recognize Estonia *de facto* on November 19, 1919, by concluding an agreement with Estonia on the exchange of prisoners-of-war. The Soviet Government was the first to recognize Estonia *de jure* by concluding a peace treaty with it at Tartu. All the first international treaties concluded by the Estonian Government with a foreign power were made with the Soviet State; the first diplomatic representatives exchanged with any foreign power were between Estonia and Soviet Russia on the level of envoys.

The bourgeois rulers of Estonia had never in their actual political activity attributed such a rigid significance to the independence of the country as they let it appear in their propaganda. The reader will certainly remember the scope of the powers conferred on the delegation headed by J. Poska when it was sent to Paris: from a fully sovereign state to an autonomous part of united Russia if the latter would be restored. It may be asserted that the position which was attained at the beginning of 1920 was a great surprise even to the bourgeois circles themselves.

Viktor Kingissepp, the then leader of the Communists of Estonia, wrote: "Every defeat suffered by the Reds on the front brought the moment nearer when Estonia would be recognized by the Entente as a province of Russia under Kolchak. It was only the tenac-

ity of the Soviet Republic, the revolutionary tenacity of the working-class of Russia that got Laidoner and Yudenich to abandon their previous standpoints. In this way there was a repetition of what had happend on December 27, 1918, when the leading bourgeois circles of Estonia had asked the British Government to occupy Estonia — namely that for reasons not conditioned by the Estonian bourgeoisie the Estonian State stayed "independent" by chance . . ."

The leader of the Estonian Communists: Why could the bourgeois government have persisted in Estonia?

To put it in other words: it was the victory of Soviet Russia over the intervention forces of the Entente that prevented the restoration of the old regime in Russia and which, judging objectively, kept the Estonian bourgeoisie at the helm of the State.

Naturally, such a course of events did not suit the aspirations of the Western powers. The peace treaty of Tartu meant that the Estonian Government was the first to recognize Soviet Russia and that Soviet Russia was the first to recognize the Estonian Government. The plans of the Western powers to establish "mandatory territories" in the Baltic area had failed. Now the Estonian Government turned to other countries and began to press them for recognition. But for a long time these attempts were destined to remain "the voice of one crying in the wilderness".

The first reactions of the Western powers were definitely negative.

On April 6, 1920, the Estonian Government applied for permission to attend the Conference of San Remo. In its application the Estonian Government pointed out that "Estonia has juridical rights to its own territory, which have clearly been confirmed by the Soviet Government. Moreover, Estonia can now resolutely insist that no Successor to Kolchak, whoever he may be, is justified in laying claim to the territory of Estonia".

A cold shower from Paris: The Estonian Government was not allowed to participate in the congress where post-war relations were discussed.

This request received no answer at all. At the same time Poland launched its campaign

against Soviet Russia with an active support from the Entente powers. The latter demanded that Estonia and Latvia should send their forces to support this campaign.

Estonia and the League of Nations in 1920.
The government expressed the wish of becoming a member of the League, pointing out that Estonia was and would be a link in the anti-Bolshevik chain.

In the period from April to November 1920, the Estonian Government applied on several occasions for membership in the League of Nations. On December 16, 1920, the application was rejected by the Assembly of the League of Nations. The reason given was that Estonia had not been recognized by the Entente countries; the representative of France even declared that it was necessary to preserve the integrity of the Russian Empire, which was going to be restored sooner or later, anyway. The Entente also wanted to preserve the possibility of proclaiming Estonia a mandatory territory or a protectorate at their convenience. If Estonia had been a member of the League of Nations, such an action might have been termed an act of aggression. Thus, Estonia was treated even worse than the defeated

First on the right in the picture is Herbert C. Hoover, a member of the US peace delegation in Paris, who was responsible for organizing the intervention in the Baltic states. Hoover himself arrived in Estonia only in March, 1938. At that time he was already Vice-President of the U.S.A.

countries, from among which Austria and Bulgaria were admitted to the League of Nations, while Germany became a member of its Labour Organization.

A whole year was to pass after the conclusion of the Peace of Tartu before the first slight shifts appeared in the stand taken by the Entente powers with regard to Estonia.

The road to Russia goes across the Baltic area.

On January 21, 1921, the question of the fate of the border regions of former tsarist Russia was raised at a meeting of the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers. In a speech lasting for half an hour, Lord Curzon, the then British Foreign Secretary, tried to explain how imprudent it would be to recognize these borderlands as independent countries. At the same time, the British Government was already negotiating with the Soviet Government about the conclusion of a trade agreement, which would have implied a *de facto* recognition of Soviet Russia. This, however, also presupposed the regulation of relations in the Baltic area.

As a result of these developments, Estonia was at last admitted to the League of Nations on September 22, 1921.

Washington persists in refusing self-determination to the Baltic countries. Secretary of State R. Lansing gives an exhaustive explanation concerning the principal standpoint the U.S.A. had in the Baltic question.

The only power that did not think of recognizing Estonia even then was the United States.

After the signing of the Peace Treaty of Tartu, the press carried an announcement issued by the US Department of State and a letter written by the Secretary of State to the "Executive Committee" of Lithuania dated January 7, 1920. It was pointed out in the announcement that the USA Administration did not intend to recognize any of the so-called republics or other governments that had come into being on the territories which had previously been constituent parts of the Russian Empire. They were said to include the so-called Estonian, Livonian and other *gubern-*

ias. Some of these new republics had sought recognition by the United States. President Wilson and Secretary of State Lansing regarded that as imprudent. In the letter there occurred the term "Provisional Government of the so-called Estonian Republic".

In order to explain why the borderlands of Russia were not recognized, the recognition given to the already dead ruler of Russia, Kolchak, was mentioned . . .

At the same time the press published an earlier letter by the US Secretary of State dating from 1919, and addressed to the Lithuanian National Council. This letter contained a reference to a diplomatic note sent to Kolchak, "Supreme Ruler of Russia", and expressed the hope that the National Council would find it "just" that the Baltic provinces should be subjected to the Kolchak Government. But by February 1920, this government had long ceased to exist. Kolchak himself had been in his grave for some time and the reference of the US Secretary of State to Kolchak was so strange that even a historical work of bourgeois Estonia published in the early 1930s dared to crack a joke at it, stating that talks suggested by Lansing between the peoples of the Baltic border region and the "Supreme Ruler" of Russia could have taken place only through a spiritualist medium.

In a letter of August 10, 1920, by the next US Secretary of State Colby, it was pointed out that the United States refused to recognize the independence of the Baltic States which had separated from Russia. It was emphasized at the end of the document that "the US Administration notes with satisfaction the declaration of the Allied and Associated Powers, according to which the territorial integrity and the frontiers of Russia are to be respected. These boundaries must comprise the entire former Russian Empire except for Finland proper and ethnical Poland".

How Washington understood the diplomatic status.

On September 11, 1920, Colby refused the right of entry to the United States to the Consul of the Estonian Republic. On October 11, he

announced that the status of the US Consul in Estonia was similar to the status of the US Commissar in Germany, who "enjoyed privileges not granted by the (US) Administration to any representative of Germany". Such a situation corresponded to the practice with regard to colonial countries. As late as May 1, 1922, the US State Department consular register still referred to the US consul in Tallinn as "consul stationed in the town of Reval of the Russian Empire".

The attitude of the United States to the Baltic States began to change in the summer of 1922. It was mentioned in the text of the letter of recognition drawn up by Secretary of State Hughes and approved by the President that "the US Administration recognizes the governments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania". This was accompanied, however, by an official announcement of the State Department which said that the United States had constantly maintained that the confused condition of Russian affairs cannot serve as a reason for the expropriation of Russian territory and that this principle must not be regarded as having been violated at the present time by the recognition of the Estonian,. Latvian and Lithuanian Governments. It appears from this wording that Estonia was granted recognition only for the time being until efforts to overthrow Soviet power in Russia succeeded. When the US Administration recognizes a country, it is expressly stated in the letter of recognition that the given country has been recognized *de jure*. The announcement under discussion on the recognition of the Baltic States does not mention with a single word that such a recognition has been granted *de jure*.

Consequently, even after July 28, 1922, the United States still stuck to the official standpoint that tsarist Russia had to be restored.

C. E. Hughes, Secretary of State of the U.S.A. in the government of President Warren Harding.
He propagated the idea of "returning to normal times", a policy that also influenced the Baltic question.

An exceptional case in the history of diplomacy:
the governments of the Baltic states were recognized, but the territories of these countries were considered to be a part of the Russian Empire.

They abandoned this bankrupt policy only . . . in 1933 (!) when the United States at long last expressed the wish to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Only from that moment onward could the temporary recognition of bourgeois Estonia become final since it was only then that the United States renounced the principle of the non-expropriation of the territory of old Russia. But even then, however, the United States did not make any new and more precisely worded statement concerning the recognition of Estonia.

The U.S.A. present Estonia a bill for war debts.
18 million dollars of additional payments for protecting the interests of the U.S.A.

The inadequacy of the recognition granted to bourgeois Estonia is also demonstrated by the circumstance that the relevant document does not mention the recognition of the *Estonian Republic* but only the recognition of *its Government*.

The Estonian Government was informed of its recognition by the United States in a letter written by the US Consul stationed in Tallinn. Announcements of the recognition of other countries by the United States are usually signed at least by the Secretary of State. This detail also characterizes the small significance attributed by the US Administration to the recognition of Estonia. Still, on the basis of this recognition, work started on the official registration of the war debts incurred by the Estonian Government. It turned out that Estonia had to pay the United States over 18,000,000 dollars for the equipment and supplies received during the war of intervention against Soviet Russia. Thus, the temporary recognition of bourgeois Estonia in 1922 may also be regarded as a necessary formula for the collection of war debts.

Something must be chosen instead of the policy of dictate.

It can be seen from the above that in the period following World War I the Western powers had to abandon many of their intentions, at least as far as the methods are concerned which were used up to the early

twenties. They had to reconcile themselves to the fact that the Soviet State continued to exist and that Socialist principles began to be implemented there. They also had to change their attitude to the peoples inhabiting the border regions of the former Russian Empire.

Some changes took place, but this did not mean that the idea was abandoned of ever using the nations on the Baltic for new anti-Soviet adventures whenever favourable conditions arose.

For the time being the Baltic States were to perform the functions of a *cordon sanitaire*.

THE CORDON SANITAIRE

ATTEMPTS have been made in historical literature to shed light on the origin of the term *cordon sanitaire* and the approximate time when it first came to be applied with reference to the Baltic states. For instance, it has been pointed out that the idea of a *cordon sanitaire* against Bolshevism originated with the French Premier Georges Clemenceau, also known as "the Tiger". Many others are said to have subsequently used the term in a more concrete sense. Thus, Franchet d'Esperey is credited with having made the following statement at the beginning of 1919: "The plan is to create a *cordon sanitaire* around Bolshevik territory and then to destroy Bolshevism".

In 1919, the term *cordon sanitaire* was already a vogue word widely used by general staffs and at government meetings.

When the German delegates had signed the Armistice in the Forest of Compiègne on November 11, 1918, the American delegation (headed by President W. Wilson) informed the Senate that German armed forces were to remain in the Baltic States with the full consent and on the order of the Allies ... so as to maintain a *cordon sanitaire*.

The Baltic area: a strategic foothold of the Western powers in their Eastern policy since 1918.

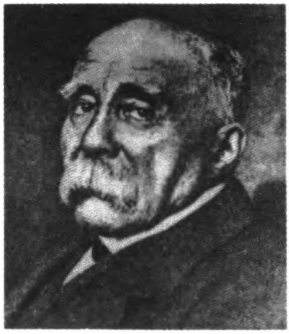
The reader will see that the term *cordon sanitaire* was associated at that time with the idea of military encirclement and the creation of

a base from which to launch armed aggression. The term was also associated with alien armed forces operating in such a base and with the foreign policy of the Entente powers. And thus we come to the source of the *cordon sanitaire* in the Baltic area. Far from being a simple "filter" to shield the Western countries from Bolshevism, this *cordon sanitaire* was a serious military venture. After the capitulation of Germany, the "Big Four" of the Paris Peace Conference took over the territories occupied by Germany and set about preparing further military adventures against the Soviet State.

Cannon against ideology — this was the purpose of the *cordon sanitaire*. And it also applied fully to Estonia in those days.

By the beginning of the 1920s such a *cordon sanitaire* had undergone several transformations. The reader is already familiar with the course of events in Estonia from the preceding chapters, but let us, nevertheless, glance back. After the Armistice signed at Compiègne the Baltic States were turned into a bridgehead of the war of intervention waged by the Entente powers against Soviet Russia. The authors of this "reorganization" are well known. They were Marshal Foch, the Commander-in-Chief, and the "Big Four" of the Paris Conference. The supreme command of the Entente powers regarded the Baltic provinces as a strategically important region where the geographic position, sea-ports, well-developed network of railways and the proximity of Estonia to Petrograd (Leningrad), in particular, were expected to facilitate effective military operations. The military missions of Great Britain, France and the USA hastened to gain control over the local military forces.

The whole of 1919 is packed with dramatic situations. The many casualties of the war leave the imprint of a "sanguinary cordon" on



French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau — one of the four great leaders of the Entente, the godfather of the anti-Bolshevik *cordon sanitaire*.

The Baltic countries become a *cordon sanitaire*. The sanguinary cordon.

From the very beginning the *cordon sanitaire* was a sanguinary cordon. In 1919 alone, the intervention war claimed about 50,000 lives (there are no exact data).

the whole of the Baltic area. The governments of the Western powers go all out to keep Estonia and Latvia in submission. To achieve this, coups d'état were resorted to (the replacement of a Latvian nationalist government by a German one; secret plans against the Estonian government, etc.) and local government circles were made directly dependent on military and economic aid from the Entente powers. Thus it became possible, in effect, for General Gough to dispose of all the fighting forces in the area.

Western policy sloughs.

Nevertheless, the end of the war in Estonia and Latvia did not mean the collapse of the idea of a *cordon sanitaire*. Only now the Western powers had to resort to more covert ways of bringing pressure to bear instead of direct military, political and economic hegemony. The pertinent changes took place in the course of the diplomatic recognition of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Official recognition considerably strengthened the position of the ruling circles of these countries, but at the same time it placed them under an obligation to remain "an outpost of the West" against the Soviet State.

And thus the *cordon sanitaire* continued to exist in a somewhat modified form, but sustained essentially by the same spirit of adventurism as before.

The possibilities of the "Common front" politics in 1920—1925.
Paris: The Baltic Union together with Poland under the hegemony of France.
London: The Baltic Union without Poland as a British sphere of ascendancy.

For many years the principal objective of foreign policy in the area was the conclusion of a military and political pact known as the Baltic Alliance. It was the design of the Western powers that Finland, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland should join this organization (Poland in its turn entering into an alliance with Rumania). Hence, there was once again to be a "common front" stretching from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea. This alliance, however, was not to come about. The obstacle proved to be the contradictions between the

states concerned and their specific interests at different periods of time. Thus, for instance, in 1920, the Polish generals demanded that the other partners should join in a new military drive "towards Moscow". This was not acceptable at that time to Finland, Estonia and Latvia. The Poles later occupied Vilnius, the historic capital of Lithuania, and, consequently, there could be no further talk of collaboration between Lithuania and Poland. Either country now wanted the other Baltic States to support it against its adversary. There was also a source of friction between Estonia and Latvia as these former allies could not agree on their common frontier, and a British court of arbitration divided one border town between them. This did not satisfy either party, and Latvia demanded that Estonia should pay 46 million French francs by way of compensation for looting and confiscations during the military intervention. In its turn, Poland claimed indemnification from Latvia for land expropriated from Polish landowners.

Poland and Estonia remained active participants in the anti-Soviet policy. The policy of the Estonian government was topped by its refusal to conclude a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union in 1921.

At any rate, after five years of attempts to create a Baltic Alliance the parties concerned had to resign themselves to the fact that they could not agree. Nevertheless, this did not preclude a continuing anti-Soviet orientation, the most consistent protagonists of which were Poland and Estonia.

When a mutiny organized by some Western countries broke out at Kronstadt, the naval fortress of Petrograd, in March 1920, the ruling circles of Estonia were on the side of the mutineers. With permission from the government, the headquarters of the mutiny was located in Tallinn. Soviet Russia protested vigorously to the Estonian Government. But plans of aggression continued to be hatched in Tallinn. The government decided to invite the British navy to help intern the Soviet

A year after the conclusion of the Tartu Peace Treaty: the headquarters of the anti-Soviet rebellion in Tallinn. With the government's permission, the Republic's territory is used for anti-Soviet ventures.

fleet. Before this, however, the mutiny at Kronstadt was suppressed.

In the autumn of the same year the Estonian Government again sought to pick a quarrel with Soviet Russia. This happened in connection with Finland's military adventure in Soviet Karelia. The government circles in Tallinn hastened to give it their diplomatic and economic support.

The operation "Estonians Uniting into an Integral National State" — a camouflage for espionage and diversion.

The activities of Estonian Government agencies during the so-called "re-patriation campaign" led to tense situations. Under the terms of the Tartu Peace Treaty of 1920, the Estonian Government was allowed to set up commissions in Soviet Russia to help organize the repatriation of Estonians to Estonia. This campaign was publicized as "the reunion of Estonians in a unitary national state". But the undertaking did not find the necessary popular support. By February 1920, 87,000 of the 190,000 eligible persons had applied for resettlement in Estonia, and many of them soon gave up the idea. The reason for this was that in Estonia itself the number of workers had fallen by one-third, there was widespread unemployment, and even experienced specialists among the immigrants could find no work. Consequently, the commissions mentioned above were not over-assiduous in arranging for the repatriation of redundant persons, and they began to function, instead, as centres of espionage and sabotage on behalf of the Western powers. It was through these commissions (which enjoyed diplomatic immunity) that looted diamonds, gold and objets d'art were taken out of Soviet Russia. The Estonian legation in Moscow was described as a "crazy exchange which was the scene of frenzied speculation running into millions". Many of these shady activities were exposed by the Soviet judicial organs.

In the years 1920—1922, in Soviet Russia, several Western intelligence centres were discovered which acted under the camouflage of the Estonian bourgeois republic's diplomatic immunity.

Estonian policy towards Soviet Russia was

revealed fairly well by the scandal which arose when A. Birk, head of the Estonian Mission in Moscow, publicly resigned his post. A. Birk announced that he had always attached great importance to the improvement of Estonian — Soviet relations and to the acceptance of the Soviet proposals which would have ensured large orders for Estonian industry and employment for the people. A. Birk declared there could be no doubt that every Estonian citizen understood how important it was for reciprocal relations with the eastern neighbour to be established on a firmer basis. The refusal to negotiate could lead to the ruin of a policy that was independent and in the national interest. A. Birk had refused to receive intelligence agents sent by the Estonian General Staff.

A scandal concerning the Estonian Ambassador in Moscow. The Ambassador's statement: The Western Powers are preparing for a war against the Soviet Union. The world will learn about the role that the Baltic countries played in the plans of a new "crusade".

The negotiations referred to by the Estonian diplomat (and which the Estonian Government refused to engage in) were primarily concerned with economic relations. Acceptance of the offers of the Soviet Government would have made it possible for Estonian industry to develop free of competition and they would have enabled the large factories and plants built during the World War to begin operating again. But the Estonian Government obstinately refused to negotiate the trade agreement which was constantly demanded by Estonian industrial and commercial circles, and even more by the workers. The concessions offered by the Soviet Government were not accepted either, and they finally went to industrial circles in Britain, Holland, and Germany. The result was that the up-to-date large-scale industry in Estonia became superfluous and its installations were later sold as scrap iron.

If in 1921 28.1 per cent of Estonia's exports still went to Russia, then in 1924

In 1926, the Estonian Foreign Ministry declared that it was time to put an end to any kind of orientation towards the Russian market. The economy of the country had to be reorganized according to the needs of the West.

they amounted to only 5.3 per cent. Revenue from transit trade decreased tenfold. A large number of enterprises went bankrupt and the economic chaos deepened.

The "cold war" policy of the government circles proved to be very costly for the Estonian people.

What were the motives that actuated such a blind policy? Above all, dependence on the Western powers. And this dependence grew with the disintegration of the country's economy and the increasing conflict between the ruling circles and the working class. Instead of undertaking a realistic assessment of the situation and adopting measures to alleviate the plight of the people (Estonia had one of the lowest living-standards in Europe), the government engaged in ventures abroad. It is noteworthy that such ventures usually reached a culmination whenever internal crises became more acute.

Terror in a "democratic republic". Oscillating according to the policy of the great powers.

In 1922—1925, a series of political trials were held in Estonia. Those in the dock included labour and trade union leaders, leftist members of parliament and prominent figures in the youth movement. This period in Estonia resembles that in present-day Greece or Spain. A hundred or more accused were tried at a time on such occasions. The courts of the "democratic republic" condemned people to hard labour... for propaganda directed against the state! There were assassinations of labour leaders throughout the country.

At the same time the government responded with readiness to every anti-Soviet move which came from the Western powers. When Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary, called for a crusade against Moscow in 1923 (because of the propagation of communist ideology!), military preparations were immediately begun in Estonia. It was

already known here that such a crusade would pass through the Baltic countries. The same response met Marshal Foch's visit to Poland, which was again linked to the preparations for a new war. In 1924 the Estonian Minister of the Interior found himself in an embarrassing position when he referred in an interview to "reliable information" concerning an imminent attack on Estonia by the Soviet Union. The government was compelled to explain that the Minister's remarks were unfounded. The truth of the matter was that at that time the last efforts were being made to carry out the plan for a Baltic Alliance and it was simply necessary to create a "favourable atmosphere."

In 1925 it was already the United States itself which sought to bring about a common anti-Soviet front. At that time the Treaty of Versailles was beginning to break up and government circles in Europe spoke openly of the return to Germany of certain eastern territories at the expense of Poland. The latter was to receive compensation in the form of the conquest of Soviet Byelorussia and the Ukraine. To achieve this, war was regarded as inevitable. And the Estonian Government once again offered its islands and the port of Tallinn as bases for the Western powers.

Such was the Estonian variant of the *cordon sanitaire* in the first half of the 1920s.

At the beginning of 1925, the Soviet Union issued a solemn warning to those who pursued adventurist policies. In a speech to the Soviet Parliament G. V. Chicherin, the then People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, said that the Baltic States should understand at last that they existed thanks to the loyalty of the Soviet Union, its respect for treaties and people's independence, and not due to the "protection" of the Western powers.

Lord C. N. Curzon, British Foreign Secretary in 1919—1924, was one of the actual organizers of the intervention against Soviet Russia. In 1923, he demanded a new offensive against Moscow. He was of the opinion that the Baltic countries were even less important to the world than the independence of Ireland.

The U.S.S.R. can never put up with the activities of other states from the Baltic territory if these activities are directed against the Soviet Union.

This hint, however, passed unheeded. The Estonian Minister of War (J. Soots) declared that there was but one enemy — the Soviet Union. The Foreign Minister (A. Piip), on his part, called for the complete renunciation of collaboration with the Soviet Union. This so-called "collaboration" involved merely what had become a negligible amount of trade between the two countries.

It was only owing to the objections of the Factory Proprietors' Union that the Estonian trade representative in Moscow was not recalled in 1926.

THE RESULTS OF ANGLOPHILE POLICY

IT WAS already when attempts were being made to form a Baltic Alliance, that the ruling circles of Estonia tended to base their orientation basically on Britain. In view of the power of British capital and navy, this orientation seemed to create a feeling of greater security. At that time views began to spread in Europe to the effect that since Soviet Russia had not perished in the long and exhausting war, the Soviet regime would of itself be "replaced" by capitalism under conditions of peace and in intercourse with the West. This was the variant of the so-called theory of "transformation" current at that time. The main proposition of the theory today is that communism and capitalism will converge somewhere in the middle of the road... But Lord Curzon's ultimatum in 1923 confirmed that the British Tories were willing to continue rattling weapons. This, however, offered the Estonian bourgeoisie a firmer guarantee in case its power should become shaky under the impact of the people's revolutionary movement.

In 1924, Great Britain and France recognized the Soviet Union. The necessity of co-operation the world over was declared in London and Paris. But the Tallinn authorities wanted to continue on the former course.

Such a guarantee had been expected of the Baltic Alliance. Now the government again turned for assistance to Britain whose naval squadron had already saved the bourgeois regime from collapse in December, 1918. Regular visits of British warships to the

In the continuous crisis of home policy, strengthening of the army was preferred to democratic reforms.
Constitutional guarantees for democratic liberties were nullified in the country.

Great Britain was asked for arms and was offered concessions in return. The Soviet Union called the Estonian Government's attention to the violation of the regulations of the peace treaty.

ports of the Baltic states encouraged the local authorities also in the 1920s.

Britain's interest in the Baltic states increased in the years 1923—24. This was due to the wish to lessen the influence of France and also because financial circles intended to invest large sums in Estonian industry, especially in the mining and processing of oil shale. A group of British M. P.'s visited Estonia in 1923. As very little was known about Estonia elsewhere in the world, the government recommended giving British firms as many orders for goods as possible to attract attention. Bases were again offered to the British Navy, the British being also promised the former large Russian-Baltic Shipyards which had become Estonian state property under the Tartu Peace Treaty and where warships and submarines had been built during World War I. The Labour Government that had come to power in Britain (Macdonald) rejected the request of the Estonian Government for greater shipments of weapons and other military equipment (because of a possible negative reaction on the part of the Soviet Union), but recommended a closer alignment of the Baltic states and co-ordination of their policies with those of London.

From 1919 to 1929, 15 Cabinets were in power in Estonia, one after another. The protests of the people against unemployment and their demands for the democratic rights were qualified by all of them as the fruits of Moscow incitement and agitation.

Governments came and went in Estonia, the bickering and rivalry between the parties led to the disintegration of a wide range of coalitions. However, foreign and domestic policies did not change much. The ruling circles realized very well that the best publicity for Estonia among anti-Soviet forces was a "hard-line policy" that is, a policy of terror against working-class organizations within the *cordon sanitaire* created by the Western powers. Social Democrat A. Hellat, who had held the post of Minister for Internal Affairs in several governments, declared, for example": I for

one like Mussolini best, but for the time being Estonia needs a Poincaré". In all those years one trial of Communists followed another. In 1924, the brutal settling of accounts with 149 working-class movement activists in Estonia attracted great attention in Western Europe. A wide-spread protest movement developed against the so-called "trial of 149". Workers in Britain, France, Germany, the U. S. A. and other countries expressed their solidarity with the Estonian workers in their struggle for democratic rights. In Britain much attention was attracted by the articles of Susana Lorens, which exposed the terror that reigned in Estonia. However, the Estonian Ambassador to London, O. Kallas, reported to his government the standpoint of some British circles (the military): "It is better to execute a hundred people at once than to shoot them one by one later on." Thus, the recommendation to the Estonian Government was that it should not keep such questions too long in the centre of attention.

The labour politics of the Estonian government in 1924—1925: over 500 people, suspected of participating in the working-class movement, were executed; 2,000 persons were imprisoned and over 6,000 arrested.

It was clear that the situation in Estonia would sooner or later lead to an armed struggle. A rising of the Estonian working class occurred on December 1, 1924. It was suppressed quickly, but served as a pretext to the government for even more remorseless reprisals and an appeal to the British Government for "speedy and effective assistance". This meant once again the sending of British warships to Tallinn.

The Estonian Embassy in Germany informed its government of criticism by both the Western socialists and bourgeois circles. The terror was not only criticized, but considered to be a sign of the government's weakness.

The British, however, did not dare to take such a step as they did not believe the propaganda hullabaloo of the Estonian Government about "Soviet aggression". It was clear to every competent person that the political course aimed against the workers which the Estonian Government pursued was in itself sufficient to bring about an armed uprising. Besides, the British also played the Tallinn govern-

ment a "mean trick": the Foreign Office had a report published in the Times saying that Estonian politicians had begged for British warships to be sent to Estonia and that this would not be done! The purpose of this action was obvious — to avoid an aggravation of relations with the Soviet Union. It is true that O. Kallas, the Estonian Ambassador to London, managed to be received by Prime Minister Chamberlain. The Ambassador tried "to bring it home" to the Prime Minister that if the workers established a Soviet regime in Estonia (!), communism would conquer the whole world, and a shift in the balance of forces in the Baltic would above all harm Britain.

This time, as well, Chamberlain's reply to the aspirations of Estonia was negative. He said that the attitude of the people of each country to communism was different and also the struggle against communism was conducted not according to one standard. Later on the Prime Minister declared that although Britain was interested in the Baltic countries, it did not regard it possible to stand up for them against the Soviet Union.

Arthur Neville Chamberlain, a Tory member of the British Government. In the above-mentioned period he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, later (1937—1940) Prime Minister. In this function, his policy was the appeasement of Hitler's Germany, culminating in the so-called "Munich Treaty" (1938), which surrendered Czechoslovakia to Hitler.

That was a heavy blow to the illusions of the Estonian ruling circles, and an attempt was again made to establish closer ties with Poland, which, however did not yield concrete results. A spokesman of the British Foreign Office even remarked that if despite everything an anti-Soviet alliance should be created, it ought to be an absolutely secret agreement in order "not to irritate the Russians uselessly".

Thus, the Estonian leaders had to cool down their anti-Soviet "energy" to keep in step with "the grand policy" of Western Europe. In those years a new trend developed there which was also directed against the Soviet Union, but which had long-term aims and was

The Republic of Estonia. Masked delegates to a congress of the outlawed Communist Party (1922).

not based on immediate operations involving the border states. The so-called "Dawes Plan", which provided for the revival of German industry (including military industry) with the help of capital from the U. S. A. and other great powers as well as for a treaty guaranteeing the Western frontiers (the Eastern ones remaining open), was meant to direct the interests of Germany once more to the east and prepare a future war against the Soviet Union. However, for the time being this orientation was only a blueprint, and Britain intended to do profitable business with the future victims of Germany.

During the years of temporary stabilization of economic life, 1925—1929, the dependence of Estonia on foreign capital increased considerably. Negotiations were held in 1925 to obtain a big foreign loan for Estonia. These negotiations were conducted through the League of Nations, which sent its representatives to Estonia to make a thorough study of the possibilities of utilizing the Estonian economy. A report on the Estonian economy said that agriculture had to remain its main

In 1925, the foreign loans of Estonia exceeded the total of the revenue. The new loan (28 million Estonian Crowns), received thanks to the guarantee of the League of Nations, made the total of loans even greater.

branch as this, contrary to the development of industry, would be conductive to "social stability".

At the demand of the financial circles of London, the former big metal industry enterprises were liquidated in Estonia. Thus Estonian industry was made dependent of the Western market.

Such a decision (upon which also the foreign loan depended) did not leave any doubt about the final fate of the large-scale industry inherited from Russia. The installations of big industrial enterprises were sold as scrap. More frequent became visits to Estonia of British businessmen who praised "the policy of dismantling the installations of industrial enterprises" conducted by the local authorities. For example, P. Daweson, a British M. P. who visited Estonia at the end of 1925 and also rented an oil-shale mine, made approving remarks about the fact that "Dvigatel", one of the largest Russian factories producing railway carriages and trucks, had been dismantled and was producing wooden cotton reels.

The military debts to Britain also contributed to the increase of Estonia's economic dependence on British capital. In 1925, these debts were estimated at more than 1,100,000 pounds.

W. Williamson's mission. The State Bank of Estonia with all of its assets serve as a guarantee for the loan granted by the League of Nations.

Another two years elapsed before the long-awaited foreign loan on behalf of the League of Nations was obtained. The terms for the loan were oppressive. To get 1,500,000 pounds, the Estonian Government had to give up the right to maintain a bank of issue. The latter passed under the control of the League of Nations whose trustee in Estonia, however, was W. Williamson, a representative of British big capital. Estonia's reserves of precious metal were to be placed under his control. The Government could not even dispose of the loan since it also remained in the hands of W. Williamson's "mission" and was to form the basic capital of the Bank of Estonia now under the control of the League of Nations. A 7 per cent interest was to be paid on the loan annually and as security the Government had to pledge all the

Estonian economy controlled by the British banks. The dividends of the foreign capital and the loan interests formed a sum that was equal to 15 per cent of the revenue in 1928.

London, 1924. The Estonian government presses England for military and economic aid. Dinner in honour of British statesmen at the Royal Kensington Palace Hotel.

income of the bourgeois state from excise--duties. Hitherto the latter had constituted a third of the revenue of the state budget. This also now passed into the hands of W. Williamson who did not leave the money in Estonia, but transferred it to banks in London and New York. And, finally, the trustee of the League of Nations made the Estonian Government deposit two-thirds of the gold received as a foreign loan in the Bank of England, which, of course, used it at its own discretion.

In the person of W. Williamson, the ruling circles of Estonia had to deal with a British emissar of very great authority. He interfered not only in the financial policy, but also in the intrigues of the political parties. But there

is nothing extraordinary about this. During the war it had been General Gough who had ordered everybody about, now it was being done by the "economic adviser" W. Williamson. Such were the methods the great powers used to exercise their authority in small countries.

Estonia arrives at political crossroads.

It is true that a certain amount of competition between the British and the French orientation continued also in the late 1920s as France was very sensitive to the strengthening of British influence in the Baltic countries. All this, however, did not bring about any changes in the situation provisionally established. Nothing happened until Britain relinquished its hegemony to Germany. This occurred in the early 1930s when the policy of directing German aggression to the east began to be implemented.

A TURN TOWARDS NAZI GERMANY

THE COLOSSAL economic jolt that shook the whole world at the end of 1929 has been rightfully regarded as an impelling force in the development of the events in the 1930s that paved the way to World War II. The economic crisis had increased the tensions in internal affairs of countries to a point of culmination. In some cases that situation had brought the extreme right-wing circles to the helm. Solution of the crisis was sought not in internal reforms, but on the international political arena. The world heard the Nazi demand for new living-space.

Hitler demands "living space".
The role of the Baltic area in the Nazi-German plans:
"We shall start from where we stopped six centuries ago. Above all, we are thinking about Russia and its borderlands." (Mein Kampf).

There were five million unemployed in Germany. To prevent a revolution, cannon-king Krupp together with other tycoons put their stakes on the fascist movement. Instead of helping the starving, millions of marks were poured into the Nazi money-box. In January, 1933, the Nazis came to power. Democratic liberties were abolished. The construction of death camps for political adversaries was started. The demand for "new living-space" was put into circulation.

The US Ambassador in Berlin wrote on September 16 that Hitler was evidently planning to annex the Baltic provinces Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia which used to be part of Russia, if he only managed to drive in a wedge. Indeed, the Nazi Fuehrer declared:

Germany's Minister of State Alfred Rosenberg to Adolf Hitler:
"The problem of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is clear. They will become German countries. We can colonize Danes, Norwegians, Dutchmen, and, after the victorious end of the war, also Englishmen there. In this way the Baltic countries will be turned into a German territory within our generation."
(From the U.S.A. prosecution document No. 1017-PS at the Nuremberg trial in 1945.)

"We shall start where we stopped six centuries ago... we shall turn our eyes upon the countries in the East."

In March, 1934, compulsory military service was re-established in Germany. The Versailles Peace Treaty was ripping at every seam. On June 18, 1935, the British Government concluded an agreement with Germany, according to which the capacity of the latter's navy could reach up to 35 per cent or more of that of the British Empire.

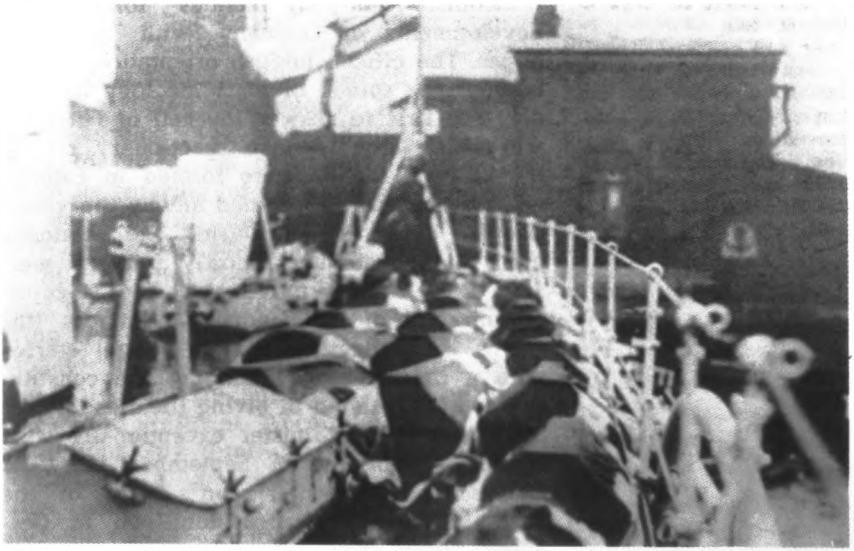
Seeing that Germany was the largest and the most powerful state on the Baltic, the agreement meant that the Baltic Sea area was placed under German control. England withdrew from these parts, in order that the tempestuously arming Germany might not hesitate to take the desired measures in the East.

In Estonia the meaning of the so-called British-German naval treaty was fully realized. It must be admitted that already earlier there was no doubt in Estonia about the political aspirations of the British ruling circles, and therefore the Estonian authorities felt no disappointment when faced with the fact of the transition of Estonia into the sphere of German influence. They were even quite well prepared for that.

Already during the 1933—34 talks in Berlin, the German Foreign Ministry stated that Estonia could belong neither to the "sterling bloc" (Great Britain) nor the "gold bloc" (France), but had to orientate its economic policy towards Germany. It was also considered inexpedient for the Baltic states to join the Swedish-Finnish group of neutral countries.

Germany refuses to guarantee the integrity of the Baltic states.

At the beginning of the 1930s Estonia took part in some political pacts that contributed to her peaceful development. A non-aggression pact was concluded between Estonia and the Soviet Union. On March 28, 1934, the Soviet Union asked the German Government



The British cruiser "Champion" taking home the remains of sailors killed in Estonia in the war of intervention in 1919. The hegemony in the Baltic area passed into the hands of Germany.

to guarantee the integrity of the Baltic states, but Germany refused.

The Baltic states had risen to a conspicuous place in Europan "grand policy", once again.

In the 1934 Soviet-French negotiations it was agreed that Poland, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Germany together with the Soviet Union would be advised to conclude a so-called "Eastern pact" of mutual aid in case of aggression. Estonia's Foreign Minister declared on July 29, 1934, that his Government would consent to conclude the pact if Germany and Poland took part in it. However, the declaration was insincere, as neither Poland nor Germany wished a pact with the Soviet Union.

On September 11, 1934, the German Government also expressed its negative attitude towards the conclusion of the Eastern pact. That was the first heavy blow on the hopes to maintain peace on the Baltic.

Fascism raises its head in Estonia, too.
Over 150 German organizations were active in Estonia, and the absolute majority of them approved of Hitler's mission. The fascist movement consolidated among the Estonian officers, as well.

Estonian right-wing factions followed the developments in Germany with increasing hopes. The official English orientation did not hamper the spread of Nazi ideology in Estonia. The first to answer the call of Hitlerism were the Baltic German reactionary circles. Illegal Nazi squads were formed in Estonia, and fascism was propagated among the young people, in particular. During the economic crisis some Estonians, mostly military men, joined the fascist movement. The so-called organization of Independence Warriors (the "Vaps" movement in current usage) started with a campaign for changing the constitution, which resulted in giving the Head of the State and Prime Minister exceptionally wide authority. Already on September 15, 1932, "Baltischer Beobachter", an organ of the Baltic German Hitlerites published in Germany, wrote about the relations of the Vaps and Hitlerites: "Although there are no official cartel ties between the Estonian national Germans and the Independence Warriors, there is undeniable sympathy between them."

In 1934, French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou made a proposal to conclude an Eastern Pact. The idea was collective security with the participation of the Soviet Union. Germany was the first to refuse. L. Barthou was murdered by German agents.

On March 12, 1934, the Estonian Government headed by K. Päts, with whom our reader is already familiar, accomplished a coup d'état, stopping the presidential elections stipulated by the changed constitution, established a state of defence throughout the country and ordered the arrest of the Vaps leaders. The latter fact attracted attention, but not for long. The head of the state acted with great determination. Parliamentary (State Assembly) elections were postponed. The existing parliament was convened only once; that remained the last and only session of the people's representatives for the next four years until the new elections, held in 1938.

The "iron head of the state" of whom it has been said that he had stopped the mouth of the whole of Estonia, discarded the existing

constitution. A new constitution was drawn up by the "National Assembly" that was partly appointed, partly elected on the strength of Päts's own decree. The draft of the constitution was not submitted to the people for discussion or approval. Even the time of its entering into force was determined by a decree. With this document, drawn up partly on the example of the fascist constitution of Italy, the President was granted the widest power possible. He could issue decrees having the strength of a law, dissolve and nominate the Government. The Parliament could only convene and issue laws by the grace of the President. According to the new constitution, only three organs had the right to nominate a presidential candidate: the lower chamber of the Parliament *(Riigivolikogu)*, the higher chamber or the State Council *(Riiginõukogu)* and a meeting of the representatives of the local administrations. K. Päts manipulated his sole nomination for candidate by all the three organs. In brief, fifteen years later K. Päts achieved what he had been planning to do already in the years 1918 and 1919. Of books published in England, J. H. Jackson's work about the Baltic States called the new regime in Estonia authoritarian and stated that it tended to muzzle the people. A publication of the Royal Institute of International Affairs termed K. Päts's regime dictatorial, which is an even more appropriate definition. Here it should be noted that fascist dictatorship was the aim of both the Independence Warriors (the "Vaps") and K. Päts, who managed to seize power before them. The only difference was that K. Päts aimed at a gradual transition to fascism, while the Vaps leaders wanted a prompt establishment of genuine fascism à la Germany. However, the ultimate object was the same.

On June 9, 1934, the local Baltic German

The Estonian variant of the fascist regime. K. Päts, who called himself the "holder of the state", usurped legislative power.

A cartoon depicting the authoritarian head of the state.

Steps understood in the right way.
K. Päts's regime is approved of by the Nazi Germans.

paper "Revaler Zeitung" wrote: "The establishment of an authoritarian regime on March 12 of this year meant a basic change in the home policy of our country. Without exaggeration we may say that in addition to the Estonian-German political co-operation of a purely practical nature, which was conducted by the Estonian Government, we now have a possibility of an intellectual and ideological rapprochement in the sphere of politics, which we have so far lacked. Now the Germans must reinforce their political position. That can and must happen only through a wider participation of the Baltic Germans as a political factor in the affairs of our home country."

The above quotation stated a fact that was already largely accomplished. The "intellectual and ideological rapprochement" had never been disrupted in some circles, but on the national level it was realized right after the coup d'état.

Political contacts with the German Nazi Party are established.

Barely a month had passed after the coup d'état, when Estonia's Head of the State K. Päts sent his brother V. Päts to the ideological leader of the Nazi party, Alfred Rosenberg, for confidential talks. V. Päts was a former teacher, and Rosenberg had been his pupil in his schooldays. The talks of the emissary and brother of Estonia's Head of the State and Rosenberg were commented upon by the Nazi press. Germany's historical mission in the intellectual moulding of the Baltic area (Germany's "living-space"), initiated by German knights and priests centuries ago, was specially emphasized.

If little is known about the rather strange visit, there are very interesting documents about the activity of Estonian diplomats. Take, for example, the unprecedented trip of Estonia's Ambassador to Nuremberg, where he participated in the so-called "Victory Con-

gress" of Hitler's party and pronounced a salutatory address to the Nazi elite who celebrated their coming into power and announced the claim of the German race to additional living-space. The assiduity of the Estonian Ambassador was termed scandalous in the diplomatic circles. No democratic state, such as England, France, the Scandinavian countries, the USA and others, had accepted the Nazis' invitation to go to raving Nuremberg. The conduct of the Estonian Ambassador was a public demonstration which took place with the knowledge of the Government. However, that was just a demonstration. The contact of a minor official of the embassy Oskar Öpik with Alfred Rosenberg was of much greater significance. That talk took place in the same year, 1933. The talk was also confidential, but took place in the Foreign Office of the Nazi party. Alfred Rosenberg told the Estonian diplomat openly that the Baltic states had paid too much attention to the West in the last years, and that their attitude had been one-sided. He did not deny that Germany was conducting its traditional "Drang nach Osten" policy; at the same time he told Öpik that Estonia's turn had not yet come. The Estonian diplomat informed his Government, however, that Germany was planning to start the colonization from Lithuania. And although the talk left no doubt as to the secret aims of the Nazi party, Counsellor of the embassy Oskar Öpik wrote in his official report to Tallinn: "At present Germany is evidently making preparations to put her ideas into practice, and one may say that a fresh breeze is blowing in the Estonian-German relationship."

The ruling circles of Tallinn regarded such a conclusion as quite acceptable.

After the conclusion of the British-German naval treaty, the Estonian Government em-

Alfred Rosenberg, one of the Nazi leaders from the retinue of Hitler, was a Baltic-German from Tallinn. Since 1941, he was Minister of State of the occupied Eastern territories. In 1933—1940, he was the mediator between Berlin and the Estonian government circles. He was executed as a war-criminal according to the decision of the International Tribunal of Nuremberg.

Comments from London: "This treaty shows that the British Government will withdraw from the Baltic countries, as it has nothing to do there in case the Germans get a strong navy." From 1935 onwards, Head of the State K. Päts has been changing his English orientation for a collaboration policy with Hitler's Germany.

barked on the path of close collaboration with Germany. Head of the German military intelligence, Admiral Canaris, visited Estonia for the first time in 1936. He negotiated with Estonian Commander-in-Chief Laidoner, who also received him once or twice later on. Chief of staff of the Estonian army Lieutenant-General N. Reek and his first aide and head of the intelligence department Colonel R. Maasing held negotiations with Canaris concerning questions relating to intelligence. Already under the tsarist regime both Laidoner and Reek had been intelligence officers. An agreement to exchange intelligence data was reached. The head of Estonia's intelligence wrote in an official report to his Government: "Both sides agreed that Estonia was to belong to the Central-European bloc."

ECHOES OF MUNICH IN ESTONIA

EUROPE was gathering momentum towards the most terrible war in history. At that time, that fact was realized by very few people. The eyes were opened only after Munich. On September 28, 1938, the leaders of the German, Italian, British and French governments concluded the notorious convention of Munich, on the basis of which a great part of Czechoslovakia was linked to Germany. The government of France renounced from its obligations as an ally. And although the British and French governments "guaranteed" the sovereignty of the rest of Czechoslovakia by that convention, they did not even plan to take any measures when Hitler had the whole country occupied.

Hitler started realizing his plans.
From October 1938 to March 1939, Czechoslovakia was liquidated; in March, 1939, Klaipeda (Memelland) was taken from Lithuania.

How was all that understood in the Baltic countries? In the Estonian press articles were published which stated that Munich would not be the only concession to Germany. The activities of the League of Nations were considered to have ended with a total fiasco. It was emphasized that, next to the Mediterranean hotbed of war, a new one had been born in Eastern Europe.

Yielding to the aggressor was now called "appeasing Germany" or "compensating the injustices of Versailles".

Nevertheless, the future victims did not seem to be fully aware of the impending German aggression. During the Munich crisis the government of Poland presented their territorial claims to Czechoslovakia. Lithuania also

Karl Selter — a leader of Estonia's Nazi-influenced foreign policy. He got his first portfolio in the government of K. Päts in 1933. He represented an open course towards Nazi Germany. After World War II it turned out that he had been an agent in the service of Germany.

An Estonian General discusses the possibility of a war against the Soviet Union with the German Ambassador in Estonia.

got an ultimatum from Poland on March 17, 1939. It was demanded to acknowledge the usurpation of the former capital Vilno (Vilnius). Lithuania gave in. Lithuania was recommended to yield for the sake of peace by the Estonian government, as well. Beginning with London and ending with the Baltic *cordon sanitaire* it became quite a fashion to give in to the aggressor.

The Estonian government did not stand aside in the realization of the Munich policy. On May 9, 1938, the ministers for foreign affairs had changed. The former minister who had not sympathized with Hitler was substituted by K. Selter, who kept the post till September, 1939, and succeeded in making Estonian foreign policy follow in the wake of the hitlerites.

The situation was as follows.

On June 10—12, 1938, the ministers for foreign affairs of the Baltic countries convened in Riga. On the initiative of the Estonian Minister for Foreign Affairs it was agreed not to let any forces of the members of the League of Nations pass through the Baltic countries if they wanted to assist the victims of aggression.

Next came the talks between the head of the Estonian military command N. Reek and the German ambassador during the visit of the German squadron and the accompanying ship on July 1, 1938, in Tallinn. They spoke about the possibilities of the German-Soviet war. General Reek thought that Lithuania and Latvia would be the arena of war. He declared that the Estonian government would not let Soviet troops pass through Estonia if they went to the aid of the German aggressor's victim, and would notify Germany. The German ambassador expressed his approval of such a standpoint.

It is known that the most crucial moment

in the aggressive plans of Germany occurred before the annexation of Czechoslovakia in September 1938. Just then Berlin was worried about the standpoints of the Baltic countries and Poland: would they agree to let the Soviet troops pass in case the League of Nations decided to use sanctions against the aggressor? At that moment the collective security of Europe was at stake: would the aggressor be stopped or would he break the common front of that security?

Annexing Czechoslovakia, Germany took the support of the Baltic states for granted.
Renouncing Item 16 of the Pact of the League of Nations, the Baltic countries and Poland refused to let the Soviet Union use their territories for helping Czechoslovakia.

But Berlin worried in vain. Tallinn and Warsaw, the next victims of Nazi Germany, were the voluntary grave-diggers for the collective security. The Minister for Foreign Affairs K. Selter did not deny in his post-war memoirs that the Estonian ruling circles had already decided to renounce the duties stated in Item 16 in the League of Nations' pact. That pact envisaged sanctions against the aggressor.

From the explanations of those concerned it becomes evident that the step that left Estonia outside the collective security system was taken by Estonia herself.

Talks between Hitler's Envoy extraordinary and the Estonian Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time of the Czechoslovakian crisis.

On an invitation by K. Selter, the Estonian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Karl Megerle, the brother-in-law of the Nazi leader H. Göring, visited Estonia on the 30th and 31st of August, 1938. K. Selter, the minister for finances and the visitor had talks on foreign policy. K. Selter wanted to know whether the Estonian government should present its declaration of not following its duties in conformity with the collective security treaty at the September session in Geneva. Megerle demanded that such a declaration should be presented by all means, since in case of the international situation becoming more acute, Great Britain and France could make Estonia take sides against Germany. At the end of the talks K. Selter said that Germany could be sure of

Estonia's presenting that declaration. He asked to be remembered to the German Minister for Foreign Affairs and promised to visit Ribbentrop on his way back from Geneva. At the meeting of the League of Nations on September 19, 1938, Selter presented the declaration of Estonia's not considering the sanctions against the aggressor as obligatory. The Estonian parliament and even the foreign commission of the parliament learned about that declaration for the first time from the press. Thus, K. Selter had made his contribution to the realization of the Munich policy by the fascists. Estonia had left the camp of collective security. That was what the fascists had been looking forward to.

Praises from the leaders of Nazi Germany.

Thanks were not long to come. The first was the Councillor of the German Foreign Service for Baltic problems von Grundherr who said: "The German Government approves of Laidoner's clear and unambiguous military policy as well as of the attitude of the Estonian Government during the crisis of Munich."

The original of the quotation can be found in the collection "Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918—1945", Series D, Vol. V, page 395.

The real award came some months later. In his speech on January 30, 1939, Hitler said: "Our relations... with the Baltic countries are the more gratifying due to their growing tendencies to withdraw from some of the paragraphs of the League of Nations. No one can estimate it more than Germany."

A day later the juiciest passages of the speech were published in the papers of Tallinn. What a thing to be proud of!

The historians are ordered to justify the intensifying collaboration with Germany.

The ever-growing influence of fascist Germany upon Estonia can also be proved by the "revaluation of history" according to the interests of the German fascists.

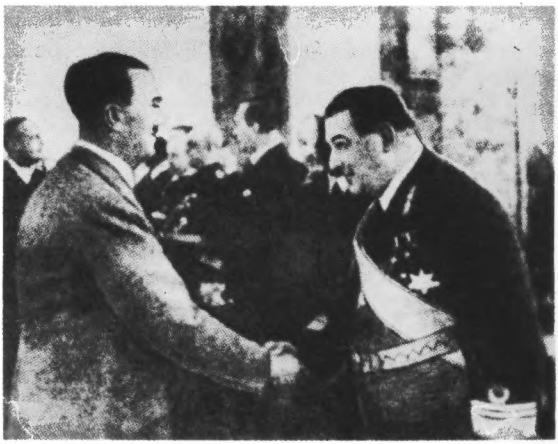
Up to 1934, the Baltic Germans were considered to be enemies of the Estonian people, having occupied the country in the 13th century and oppressed the people nationally and socially for seven centuries.

A historian of Tartu University, "vaps" J. Vasar published an article in the magazine "ERK", demanding cardinal revaluation of the Estonian science of history. He emphasized the need of regarding history from a contemporary standpoint, without stressing the contradictions with the Baltic Germans. The goal of the Estonian government should be identical with that of the Baltic Germans from the 13th up to the beginning of the 18th century — to fight against Russia. Some time later Commander-in-Chief of the Army Laidoner took the floor in the same issue and alleged that the power of the Baltic German feudals in Estonia was not alien, because they had maintained a well-organized state!

The Commander-in-chief himself starts to "elucidate history": the feudal state of the German invaders was a result of the union and collaboration between the Germans and the Estonians.

The grandest falsification of Estonian history in the interests of the fascists was undertaken by Jüri Uluots, a leading politician and scientist, later Prime Minister, and during the

"In a single file". Estonian nationalists in the tracks of their "big paragons". Cartoon, published before the beginning of World War II.



Together with Nazi Germany. Lieutenant-General Nikolai Reek, Commander of the Estonian Army Staff (on the right) congratulating Adolf Hitler on his 50th birthday in Berlin. Let's recall the fact that the same man had organized the march of the German occupation forces into Tallinn on February 25, 1918 (see the photo-copy on page 32) and after that been the staff commander of the German military unit "Estnische Division".

German occupation of 1941—44, Dean of the Law Department of Tartu University.

In 1937 he published a book in German, entitled "Die Verträge der Esten mit den Fremden im XIII Jahrhundert". The centuries-long struggle of the Estonians against the German invaders was not touched upon in the book. A proposition was presented as if the Estonians had surrendered by an agreement. Although German history itself had never even hinted at such a possibility, the bourgeois Estonian historiography was now offering a psychological preparation effect. In Germany it was now openly stated that the Baltic countries should once again become German "living-space".

The agreement-theory of Uluots in 1935——1939 meant that if the rulers of Estonia were offered an opportunity to conclude a pact with the German fascists, it would be a traditional continuation of the one-time feudal law.

The earlier Estonian and German historians knew only of two treatis from the years 1241

and 1255. According to those documents, the Estonians from Saaremaa, the biggest Estonian island, surrendered after desperate uprisings against the foreign conquerors.

The Estonian surrender, due to the majority of the warriors, including the chiefs, having been killed in battles, was now treated as a "Christian fraternity pact" or a "vassallage pact". The "theory" was meant to point out the Germans' proprietary right over Estonia. There could hardly be greater national treason than that.

History repeats itself.

The "reorientation" to serve the new masters was carried out in that manner. Actually it meant turning back into the lap of Great Germany, where the game about Estonian "independence" had started 20 years ago.

"The Munich of the Baltic states" was being prepared.

THE ESTONIAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT WANT A SECURITY GUARANTEE

The German army marching into Lithuania.
The Estonian Government declares its neutrality.
At the beginning of 1939, Hitler annulled the last agreements preventing him from carrying out his plans of invasion.

NEVER before had the ruling groups of Estonia been so verbose on Estonia's neutrality as during the period when the German troops were marching into Czechoslovakia and the danger of aggression against the Baltic countries was increasing. Lithuania, having got no support from Estonia, Latvia or Poland was forced to yield the Klaipeda area to Germany on March 22. The Governments of Great Britain and France who, according to the Versailles treaty had pledged to aid Lithuania in case of an infringement upon its sovereignty and considered the Klaipeda area a part of it, withdrew. Germany had got free hands in the East!

In his speech at the Diet Hitler revoked the Anglo-German Military Navy Deal of 1935 and the German-Poland Non Aggression Pact of 1934. Neither a neutrality policy nor deals with Germany seemed now enough to safeguard the Baltic countries against German agression. In March 1939, it became known that von Grundherr, the "Baltic chief", had told the German Foreign Ministry that the neutrality of the Baltic countries was inconceivable. The Baltic States should arrive at a decision on which side and against whom they were. In that respect the Estonian authorities were reported to maintain "the most positive" attitude!

Berlin demands clarity concerning the attitude of Estonia.

Such a situation left no doubt about the coming "invasion of the east" since the Nazi German policy was directed against the Soviet Union. Neither was there any doubt that the Baltic countries were to play a considerable role in the preparations for that invasion. It was not known, however, in what way Germany intended to make use of those states. Actually the situation was perfectly clear. The whole history proved that the Baltic countries had always been a bridgehead in aggressions against Russia. It was to be expected that Germany would try to annex the Baltic States.

The Baltic area is to become a foothold for military activities, once again.

Consequently, measures had to be taken to avoid the danger.

In the early summer of 1939, Anglo-Soviet talks on how to repel the German aggression and guarantee the sovereignty of the Baltic States began.

British — Soviet talks. Proposal to guarantee security.

According to the wish of Nazi Germany, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had withdrawn from the collective security system of Europe. Now they were offered guarantees by Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union. It is clear that the purpose of that offer was to isolate the Baltic States from Germany. But what was the attitude of the Estonian official circles towards that attempt?

The answer to the question can be found in the letters and reports sent from Tallinn by the British diplomatic representative W. H. Gallienne to his Foreign Secretary. In order to review the situation in Estonia, some of his information will be used here. In his annual review to Viscount Halifax, the then Foreign Secretary of Great Britain, W. H. Gallienne reported that after the occupation of Klaipeda (Memelland) by fascist Germany "the Soviet Government made a declaration to the Estonian Government stating that any threat, direct or indirect, to the sovereignty of Estonia

Reports of British diplomat W. H. Gallienne from Tallinn.

In April, 1939, F. Roosevelt personally appealed to Hitler and Mussolini, wanting them to confirm that they would not violate peace in Europe and in the Middle-East during ten years. Hitler and Mussolini expressed their astonishment concerning the US president's suspicion.

and Latvia would affect the interests of the Soviet Union." Next, the message of President Roosevelt to Hitler was recalled, referring to the possible aggression in respect to the Baltic countries. Berlin "asked the Estonian Government whether they considered themselves in danger of aggression by Germany, and whether President Roosevelt had consulted them before he sent his message to Hitler?" The Tallinn official circles gave a negative answer to both questions. At the same time, extreme nervousness was displayed about the Anglo-Soviet talks, at which the main problem discussed was guaranteeing security to the Baltic States. The Estonian Foreign Ministry indicated that they would welcome a British guarantee, but not one from the Soviet Union.

We quote W. H. Gallienne again:

"On the 26th May a communication was made to the Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that His Majesty's Government were disposed to agree that effective collaboration with the Soviet Union against aggression in Europe might be based on a system of mutual guarantees in general conformity with the prindiples of the League of Nations. It was added that in drafting a formula they would have every regard to the susceptibilities of the Baltic States. The Minister expressed gratitude, and also congratulations on the approaching understanding with Russia.

From May onwards, Estonian official circles frequently expressed the opinion that an Anglo-Soviet agreement could never be signed and that Great Britain was foolish to continue negotiations. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires however, told the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Estonian authorities were being foolish in their attitude of opposition to an Anglo-Russian agreement, and that they were stiffening the Soviet demands by open hostility to the Soviet Union.

SCANDINAVIA AND BALTIC STATES. August 19, 1940.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 3.

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Mr. Gilliexne to Viscount Halifax.—(Received August 19.)

(No. 170.)

My Lord, *Tallinn, July 13, 1940.*

IN your Lordship's circular despatch of the 4th November, 1939, I was instructed to prepare a general review of political events in Estonia during the year. Pressure of work has led me to postpone the preparation of this report, but, since this might well be the last opportunity, I am writing a brief report which will leave by bag for Riga to-morrow.

2. The political reviews prepared by His Majesty's representatives at Riga and Kovno contain clear descriptions of the general conditions which affected the three Baltic States as a whole, and it will, I think, be unnecessary for me to cover this ground anew. My summary should, therefore, be regarded as complementary to these other reports.

3. A list of treaties concluded by Estonia was prepared in advance, and is enclosed.(*)

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Political Intelligence Department and to His Majesty's Ministers at Riga and Kovno.

I have, &c.

W. H. GALLIENNE.

Enclosure.

ON the 28th March the Soviet Government made a declaration to the Estonian Government that any threat, direct or indirect, to the sovereignty of Estonia and Latvia would affect the interests of the Soviet Union. The Estonian Government gave a conciliatory reply, stating, however, that it was for them themselves to decide whether their sovereignty was affected in any circumstances that might arise.

On the 21st April the German Government asked the Estonian Government whether they considered themselves in danger of aggression by Germany, and whether President Roosevelt had consulted them before he sent his message to Hitler.

Extreme nervousness was displayed in Tallinn official circles at the Anglo-Russian conversations, and there was a general feeling that England was preparing to sell the Baltic States to the Soviet Union. On the 2nd May the Foreign Ministry stated that they had received a report that Great Britain and the Soviet Union were preparing to guarantee the Baltic States. The Foreign Ministry indicated that they would welcome a British guarantee, but not one from the Soviet Union, nor would they agree to the admission of Soviet troops.

On the 4th May the German Government proposed a non-aggression treaty with Estonia. The Estonians made counter-proposals reserving, *inter alia*, the right to continue normal peace-time exchange of goods and transit, and excepting the Estonian-Latvian military alliance.

On the 15th May the Minister for Foreign Affairs asked whether it was true that His Majesty's Government had no serious objections to the proposed non-aggression pact with Germany, provided it contained no provisions which might have more far-reaching interpretations. He also asked whether the possibility had been considered that His Majesty's Government could, in the event of a general conflagration, exert influence on the Soviet Government to abstain from any aggressive policy towards Estonia. A reply was conveyed to the Minister on the 19th May stating that, while His Majesty's Government could not take

(*) Not printed.

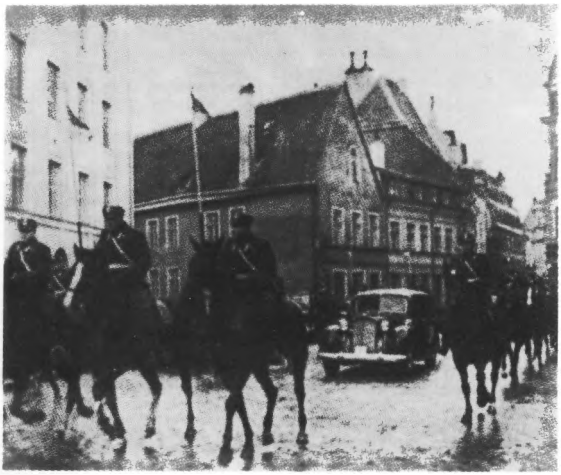
Nobody believes in the declaration of neutrality.

On the 1st September the Estonian Government published a declaration of strict neutrality, and on the 5th September, the Minister for Foreign Affairs orally informed His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires that this declaration applied also to the war between Great Britain and Germany. On the 11th September the Minister for Foreign Affairs, referring to an assurance of respect of neutrality given by Great Britain to Sweden, indicated that Estonia would welcome such an assurance.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs was told orally that the position of Estonia was different from that of Sweden, and that the assurance to Sweden was designed to stultify German propaganda. Obviously there could be no *question* of British forces violating Estonian neutrality . . .

The Estonian Government's diplomatic manoeuvres to thwart the pacts. At the same time, anti-Soviet contacts of the Polish and Estonian armies became more active.

The issue was the guarantee of Estonia's sovereignty. Estonia makes but an ambiguous declaration: they would welcome a British guarantee, but not one from the Soviet Union. Such was the viewpoint of the Minister for



The year 1938. The British Chargé d'Affaires still makes his rounds in Tallinn accompanied by an escort of honour, but the policy is already dictated by the ambassador of Nazi Germany.

Foreign Affairs K. Selter. What did he think when he made such a declaration? It is quite clear that Great Britain alone would not have been able to guarantee Estonia's sovereignty in case of war with Germany, neither would she violate Estonian neutrality, being unable to enter the Baltic Sea. The British guarantee would have been possible in collaboration with the Soviet Union (in case of war the access to the Baltic Sea via Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, support from the Soviet bases in the Baltic, supplying munitions through the Soviet Union, etc.). Thus, the British guarantee would have been possible only in collaboration with the Soviet Union. In refusing to accept the latter, the British guarantee was politely rejected as well.

In the West, quite a powerful movement against the "Munich policy" was consolidating at that time. That movement demanded collaboration with the Soviet Union. It was not due to any sympathy towards the latter, but to realistic considerations of its military potential in curbing the German aggressor.

Winston Churchill concerning collaboration with Russia. In greater detail in the book: The Second World War, I.

The conservative M. P. Winston Churchill recalled that already on March 14 of the previous year, i. e. two days after the usurpation of Austria, he had said that it was the last opportunity to stop the aggression. He told the Parliament that after the crime and treachery committed against Czechoslovakia, the first duty of the British was to establish respect for law and public faith in Europe. Churchill admitted that Russia was a ponderous counterpoise in the scale of world peace and no one could say that there was not a solid identity of interests between the Western democracies and Soviet Russia and that the British Government should do nothing to obstruct the natural play of that identity of interest... "The worst folly, which no one proposes we should commit, would be to chill

and drive away any natural co-operation with Soviet Russia..."

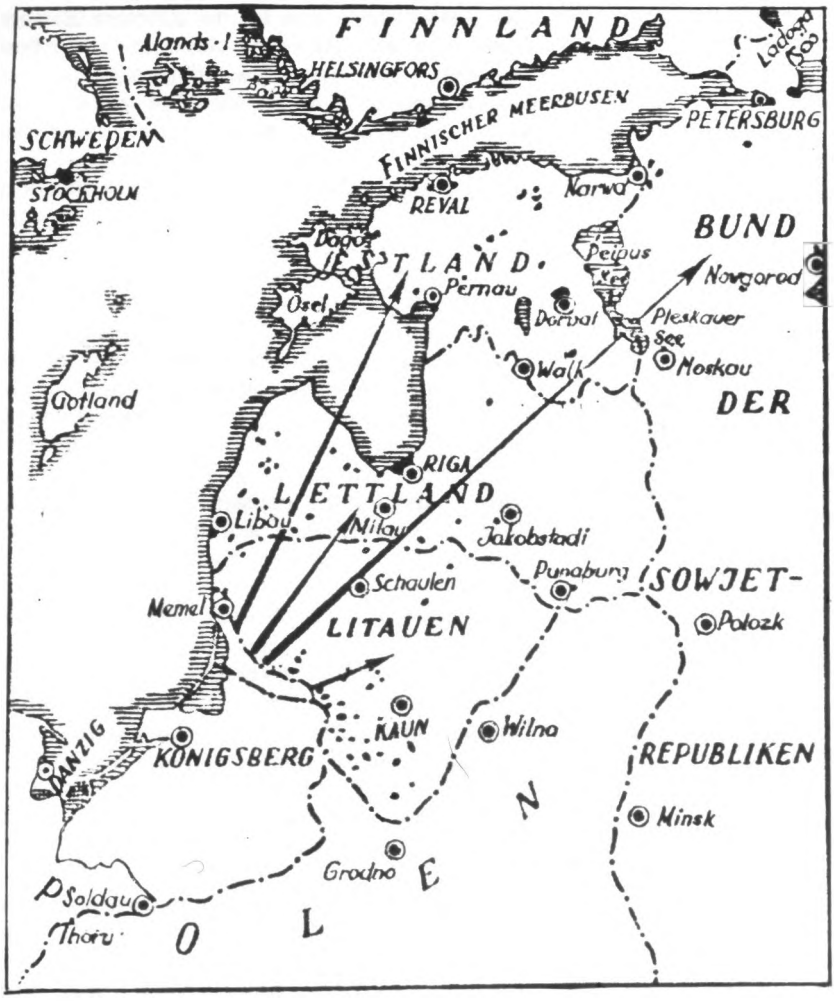
Prime Minister Lloyd George admitted that it was impossible to protect Poland without Russian help and that, above all, a pact with Russia should be achieved. "I ask the Government to take immediate steps to secure the adhesion of Russia in a fraternity, an alliance, an agreement, a pact."

Dialogue between Chamberlain and Churchill. See: Parliamentary Debates (Fifth Series, Vol. 347. London, 1939).

Such viewpoints were not in accordance with the policies of the British and French governments at the period of national treachery. But the opposition attacked more fiercely, and the argument between Churchill and the government of Chamberlain continued for some time. After the rejection of the Soviet proposal for a united defence of Eastern Europe, Winston Churchill pointed out on May 4, 1939, that not only the adhesion of Russia but that of the three Baltic States — Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia — was of vital importance. These three belligerent nations with 20 courageous divisions were in great need of help from friendly Russia, who would supply them with munitions and aid in other ways.

Winston Churchill, outstanding British politician. Understanding the danger coming from Germany, he sought collaboration with the U.S.S.R. from 1939 onwards.

The British Foreign Office was well aware of the German-Estonian Non-Aggression Pact. The idea of such a pact was nothing else than to prevent Estonia from entering any pact against Germany, and at the same time give it an opportunity to call German troops to Estonia at any time. It was no secret. But the British Government was still refusing to take any counter-action. On May 19, Churchill said in the Commons: "An Eastern peace front, or a War front as it might become — can be set up only with the effective support of a friendly Soviet Russia lying behind all those countries ... Without any effective Eastern front, there can be no satisfactory defence of our interests in the West, and with-



In 1938—1939, the Nazi-German press frequently published a map with arrows that had an unambiguous meaning: the Nazis were planning an aggression against the Soviet Union via the Baltic states.
The photo was published in the "Danziger Vorposten".

out Russia there can be no effective Eastern front ... If His Majesty's Government ... now reject and cast away the indispensable aid of Russia, and so lead us into the worst of all wars ... It is a vital major interest of Russia that these Powers (the Baltic countries — Editor's note) should not fall into the hands of Nazi Germany." Throughout the following months Churchill was of the opinion that a pact of three should guarantee the sovereignty of the Baltic States.

Thanks to the governments of the Baltic countries, Neville Chamberlain could carry on the policy of "directing the German aggression towards the East" up to the very beginning of World War II.

But on July 7, the Estonian Ambassador in London August Schmidt (later Torma, an Estonian surname, was adopted instead of the German Schmidt) presented a memorandum to the British Foreign Office, asking the British Government not to give Estonia any help without the latter's consent. He said that the Estonian Government would look upon such help as an act directed against Estonian neutrality.

On June 7, 1939, British Prime Minister Chamberlain announced in the Commons: "His Majesty's Government have received several communications from the Finnish, Estonian and Latvian Governments indicating that in view of their intention to maintain strict neutrality, they did not wish to receive a guarantee as a result of the present negotiations between Great Britain, France and Russia."

A month and a half before the beginning of the war, the Soviet Union made one more attempt to arrange joint protection of the Baltic area, together with the naval forces of Great Britain and France. The Estonian Government did not respond to the proposal.

The Soviet Government was aware that the Estonian bourgeoisie feared to lose its position when accepting Soviet help. This fear was not justified, however. It was also known that the British official circles were uneasy about losing their influence over Estonia in case of bolshevization. That was why on August 15 the Soviet Government made the following proposals to Great Britain and France: they should obtain an agreement from the Baltic States to use the

ports of the Åland Isles, the West-Estonian Archipelago (Saaremaa, Hiiumaa, Vormsi islands), Hango, Pärnu, Haapsalu, Heinaste and Liepaja in order to protect the neutrality and sovereignty of these states in case of German aggression. As far as the Soviet Baltic fleet was concerned, it would also lie in the same parts together with the joint fleet of Great Britain and France in defence of the Baltic States' sovereignty. That proposal was also rejected.

A MILITARY COLLABORATION PACT WITH GERMANY

Estonia and Latvia conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany. Hitler gets free hands for action on the Baltic territories.

AT THE TIME when the more realistically minded Western politicians were after closer contacts with the Soviet Union, the Estonian Government started to emphasize its good relations with Nazi Germany.

On April 28, 1939, Hitler promised to guarantee the sovereignty of every state, who wished it. It is quite significant that at the same time the Estonian official circles made the first steps towards concluding a pact with the Nazis. It was as if Berlin and Tallinn had "read each other's thoughts".

In 1939, Oskar Öpik, who was mentioned in one of the previous chapters, was not an insignificant embassy counsellor any longer. His political insight (or probably his belonging to the Foreign Service agents of the Nazis) had helped him to become Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. Now he was receiving ambassadors himself. The diplomatic mail of the German Ambassador in Tallinn Frohwein includes the following message: "Öpik proposed to conclude a German-Estonian Non-Aggression Pact, the aim of which would be 1) to prevent Estonia from making any security pact with the Soviet Union and 2) to avoid drawing Estonia into the siege-system against Germany, as a result of the Anglo-Russian talks."

This message found its way even into London publications — "Documents on German

The simultaneous ceremony of signing the German-Estonian and the German-Latvian non-aggression pacts in Berlin on June 7, 1939. In the centre German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop.

Foreign Policy 1918—1945" (Series D, vol. VI, No. of the doc. 315).

On May 16, the Estonian Ambassador in Berlin was presented with the draft of the pact. The Ambassador said that his government was happy to receive the document. On that occasion, von Grundherr of the German Poreign Office stated in his memorandum: "Now we have established friendly relations with Estonia in military affairs, too."

On June 7, 1939, the Non-Aggression Pact with Germany was signed. The president of the Estonian Republic ratified it on June 22, 1939. The same kind of pact was concluded with Latvia.

That "non-aggression" pact isolated Estonia from the powers working against German aggression. It was not a pact showing neutrality or love for peace.

Open military collaboration with the German forces.
German military leaders begin to inspect the armed forces of Estonia.

Five days after the discussion of the non-aggression pact in the Estonian Parliament, Franz Halder, Commander of the General Staff of the German Army, General of Artillery, together with five officers arrived in Tallinn. Among the officers there was the deputy of the German military representative in Moscow, Lieutenant Colonel Krebs. Lieutenant General N. Reek, Commander of the Estonian Army General Staff, gave them an address of welcome. The leaders of the intelligence department of the General Staff were also present. Already on the same day, Halder had talks with Commander-in-Chief Laidoner in the latter's country home near Tallinn.

About these talks with the Commander of the German Abwehr Canaris and General Halder Laidoner later said the following: "Canaris visited Estonia for the last time in July, 1939. During all his visits he discussed the activities of the intelligence service. I spoke in detail about our position in case of a clash between Germany and Great Britain or Germany and the Soviet Union. Canaris was interested in how long the Soviet Union could last at the total mobilization of its forces and transport."

What was the aim of Admiral W. Canaris's visit to Tallinn? Admiral W. Canaris, Chief of the German Intelligence, played an important part in starting the war.
After the 1944 conspiracy against the Fuehrer, he was executed at Hitler's order.

On the next days, together with higher officers, Halder inspected the local troops. The German Ambassador Dr. Hans Frohwein said on that occasion: "When relations between the armies of two countries are as friendly as those I have gladly and thankfully just witnessed, it is at the same time the most visible proof of the trusting and friendly character of these countries. I dare hope that this visit will further develop and expand the good relations between Germany and Estonia."

So Halder had not come for pleasure, but on business — together with Colonel Gen-

What did F. Halder, Chief of the General Staff of the German Army, do in Estonia?
General Halder was personally co-ordinating the occupation of the Baltic countries and operations against Leningrad. Due to the failure of Blitzkrieg, he fell out of Hitler's favour.

eral W. von Brauchitsch he had to plan the operations of the Eastern campaign.

The diplomatic representative of Great Britain in Tallinn, W. H. Gallienne reported to Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax on July 11: "Prominent Estonian statesmen had told me at various times during the past few years, and I had so reported to my government, that they would accept German help to repel any Soviet aggression, but would refuse Soviet help to repel German aggression. This, I said, was not impartial neutrality and might give the Soviet Government grounds for insisting that Estonia was not competent to decide when help was necessary. Moreover: I added, not only were there attacks on Great Britain, but my information was that Estonia was tending to become pro-German. ... business circles, moneyed classes and the army were apparently veering in that direction, and the Estonian Government might be encouraging this receiving a host of German officials — Canaris, Benteville (Bentevegni), von Kleist, Böhming and so on..." About June 20, Tallinn, Kaunas and Helsinki were indeed visited by the German Army

The Nazi espionage gets free hands in Estonia.

Intelligence Chief, Vice-Admiral Friedrich Wilhelm Canaris together with Colonel Hans Piechenbrock and von Kleist, Böhming and some others from the office of Ribbentrop.

The leading officials of Admiral Canaris's office take a personal interest in Estonia.
Lieutenant-General Hans Piechenbrock at the top and end of his career.

Of the Nazis mentioned in Gallienne's report, Lieutenant General Hans Piechenbrock was Chief of the 1st department of the German Army Intelligence up to 1943. He helped Canaris to organize the provocative raid of the German radio-station in Gleiwitz, the raid organized by the German Intelligence disguised in Polish uniforms. This raid was quoted as the reason for starting the first campaign against Poland. Piechenbrock's career came to an end when he had to answer for his crimes before a Soviet law court. To the investigator's question "Which intelligence services were you in contact with?" he answered: "We were in contact with Estonian espionage (too)." Piechenbrock added, "Besides, we got information from the bordering states of Russia, such as Finland and Estonia, who sent their spies to Russia at the order of the German espionage."

"A friendly visit" and the fights with German sailors in the streets of Tallinn.

There were more military contacts of Estonia and Germany at that time. On July 12, the German destroyer "Admiral Hipper" arrived on a visit in Tallinn. It was not an ordinary good-relations visit, but a military demonstration. In the streets of Tallinn people attacked the German sailors wearing fascist emblems.

What was the West-European attitude towards such developments of the situation?

On July 26, 1939, the Estonian Ambassador Schmidt had a talk with Britain's Foreign Secretary and stated that the Estonian—German Non-Aggression Pact would not change the Estonian foreign policy. Nevertheless, he could not convince the Foreign Secretary of the harmless nature of General Halder's visit and its timing — immediately after the Non-

Aggression Pact of June 7. As far as the visit of German Intelligence chiefs was concerned, Schmidt had to admit that it had been "an unfortunate and mysterious affair." In his report to Estonia, Schmidt wrote: "It seems that the opinion of our becoming pro-German has widely spread in certain circles. In addition to that came General Halder's visit to Estonia and Finland just at the present moment. But even a graver viewpoint is taken considering Admiral Canaris's and Colonel Piechenbrock's trip to the Baltic States . . ."

The Estonian—German pact left no doubt in Europe about the threat of a new world war. We shall quote the Swedish paper "Arbetaren" of July 13, 1939.

"The Nazi press is happy about the success Hitler's diplomacy has achieved in the Baltic countries in the fight for the Baltic States. It means a political as well as a strategic victory for the Third Reich. No wonder, the joy in the main Nazi states is great. The pact concluded with Germany by Estonia and Latvia can be understood only as a failure of the Soviet Government's wish to link Finland and the Baltic States to the envisaged Anglo-French-Russian security system. The German authorities are of the opinion that the German State has won back its Baltic area it had had to give up after World War I."

The international opinion concerning the situation in the Baltic countries was pessimistic: "The annexation of the Baltic states opens the way to Leningrad for Hitler" (Sweden);
"The Soviet Union has the right to demand the isolation of the Baltic countries from Germany" (England).

The same paper stated:

"In Hitler's preparations for war, the Baltic States play an important role. The distance between Germany and the Soviet Union in the North-East is only 300 km. Conquering the Baltic area would enable Hitler to control the whole Eastern coast of the Baltic Sea and take his troops up to the gates of Leningrad. This role of the Baltic States explains the great part devoted to them in the Anglo-Russian talks during the recent weeks."

The British attitude, although emotionally more reticent, was about the same in the summer of 1939.

The public opinion of Great Britain concerning the future developments differed a lot from that of Downing Street.

Commenting on the German—Estonian Pact on July 7, 1939, the very day it was signed, the "New Review" pointed out. "... the Nazis treat Estonia as a state already under their political and economic control."

The "News Chronicle" enabled the British Vice-Admiral C. V. Osborne, who was engaged in Navy Intelligence, to express his opinion about the direction the Estonian Government had taken. The Admiral wrote: "In the campaign against Poland, Germany does not need the Baltic States, but in case of a Russian campaign, it would be a geat advantage for Germany to seize Riga, Tallinn, the islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa (Look at the map on page 165, presented by the German press — Editor's note). The situation in the Baltic countries is dangerous and Russian worries are well grounded."

This was written three months before "the campaign against Poland". Official London foresaw the approaching catastrophe. And by expressing the plain truth without any frills — and in that matter the British were forced to drop their usual reticence — the Estonian Government was supposed to grasp the idea.

It was obviously understood, but no conclusions were made.

W. Churchill concerning the role of the Baltic countries on the eve of World War II.

At that time Winston Churchill made a widely-referred declaration about Hitler penetrating into the last defence-line his slow and indecisive enemy had. Later, when the crucial point had been passed and all the basic connections cleared, Churchill said that the conduct of the Baltic States had been an obstacle on the way of Anglo-French coalition with Russia and had paved the way for a treaty between Molotov and Ribbentrop.

In such a situation, on August 20, the Soviet Government considered it expedient to agree with the German proposal about the Soviet—German Non-Aggression Pact. It was signed on August 23. Thanks to that it was at least possible to postpone the beginning of the fascist campaign against the Soviet Union till July 22, 1941, and hundreds of kilometres to the West at that. The pact also prevented an occupation of Estonia by the Nazis in the autumn of 1939, as it had been planned earlier.

The German—Soviet Pact of August 23 was a surprise to the Estonian official circles. Not knowing the details, the bourgeois leaders were for some time still expecting the beginning of a war against the Soviet Union in that very year.

F. Roosevelt concerning the non-aggression pact between Germany and the Soviet Union: "It may only be a manoeuvre of Stalin to gain time."

THE CRASH

What made the Estonian ruling circles refuse the guarantee of Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union, and join Nazi Germany?

SCHOLARS who have studied the situation in Estonia in the 1930s are almost unanimous in the assertion that in 1939 there was not a single influential bourgeois grouping here that would have taken a stand against the pro-Nazi foreign policy. It is all the more evident that, like in 1918, the Estonian bourgeoisie had desisted from fighting for the country's independence and entrusted their fate to German imperialism. As before, the sole motive for the national treason was the hatred of the Soviet Union, the hatred of socialism.

Whatever the assertions about Estonia's neutrality, political observers had no doubt that the Estonian ruling circles were preparing to welcome the German troops.

In August 1939, the Italian Ambassador in Tallinn Cicconardi informed his Minister for Foreign Affairs of his talk with Oskar Öpik, Estonia's Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. The latter had been concerned about the difficulties that Germany would have to face when sending a landing party to Estonia. Namely, from talks with German military specialists, Öpik had learned that 16 warships were needed for the landing of one German division. The Italian Ambassador added on his part: "There is always the possibility of sending the German military forces

through Lithuania and Latvia. The idea to use the Estonian islands Saaremaa and Hiiumaa as bases for the German fleet seems hardly feasible, seeing that the islands are not suited for that purpose. Fitting out and preparatory work would take a lot of time..."

The subject matter of the Italian Ambassador's correspondence (as well as his contact with the leading officials of Estonia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs) stands to reason: Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy were allies. Let us recall the term "the Berlin — Rome axis". And if the representative of Estonia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs conversed with the Italian diplomat in this vein, his talks with the Germans were probably still more explicit.

Were they aware of the possible results of their policy?

Estonian political circles made no secret of the fact that such delicate matters had a bearing on... the German—Estonian Non-Agression Pact and the expected Nazi attack on the Soviet Union.

However, the question is whether such assertions were well grounded.

Mutual squabbles of some Estonian political figures of those times, who later emigrated to Sweden, the German Federal Republic and also to the U.S.A. after World War II, have helped to answer the question in the affirmative. Their mutual accusations have revealed many interesting facts.

In June, 1939, the democratic opposition in the Estonian Parliament, headed by former head of the state J. Tõnisson, presented a protest to the president: "Joining forces with Germany was done without the Parliament's consent. The government's policy will bring about antagonism between Estonia and the Soviet Union and destroy the confidence of Great Britain."

For example, there has been much controversy about why the oldest bourgeois party leader Jaan Tõnisson had uttered the warning at the discussion in the Estonian Parliament in June 1939, saying that the German-Estonian Non-Aggression Pact meant a threat to the state's sovereignty and that it would have been better to seek help from the Soviet Union. After all, Jaan Tõnisson was also a staunch anti-communist and a politician with

the traditional Western orientation. But the heart of the matter was that this old and experienced politician warned against the recurrence of the year 1918. In February 1918, K. Päts's grouping had also proclaimed "neutrality" in the Russian—German war, which, however, did not prevent them from contacting the Germans and applying for their protection. Thus the "neutrality" had resulted in the German occupation of Estonia, and the driving force had been the desire to overthrow Soviet power.

Historical parallels between the declarations of "neutrality" in 1918 and 1939.

Several other politicians drew also parallels with the year 1918. Thus Ado Anderkopp, deputy chairman of the parliament and leading industrialist, said that in her relations with Germany Estonia had got so far that it only remained to sign an agreement similar to the one signed in February 1918 between Commander of the Estonian troops Colonel E. Põdder and an officer of Germany's General von Seckendorff concerning the placing of the Estonian troops under the latter's command. A. Piip, Minister for Foreign Affairs in several cabinets, pronounced from the speaker's rostrum in Parliament: "I remember that once we have already been disappointed in such a policy and found out that it was not enough to proclaim independence. That was in 1918."

On the border of Estonia a German bastion was built in the summer of 1939. The construction site was inspected by General F. Halder.

Another noteworthy event of these times was the construction of the fortification zone behind Narva with the help of German specialists. In print the undertaking was even called "the German bastion" behind Narva. The construction work was superintended by the Reichswehr. As becomes evident from archives documents, Major General of the Estonian Engineers V. Riesberg was received in Germany in connection with that undertaking. In Berlin a variant of the fortifications for o f f e n s i v e operations was elaborated. The fortifications on the former Czechoslovakian

border, of which the Major General had made a detailed study, served as an example.

Thus the Estonians built a base for an attack upon Leningrad for the Germans.

Hitler's "fifth column" in Estonia was, above all, formed of 16,000 Baltic Germans. In 1939, the "Union of German Societies" was formed of 130 organizations which claimed to be "outposts of the German motherland in the East".

Naturally, the threads of such policy proceeded from the embassy of Nazi Germany in Tallinn. Estonia's "top circles" thronged at its receptions and garden parties. From here the activities of the Estonian "fifth column" were directed. As it turned out later, the above-mentioned Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Oskar Öpik, leading official of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Oskar Angelus, specialist in economics Alfred Vendt, head of the army staff intelligence department Colonel Willem Saarsen, Chief of the Police Hans Sooman, the president's brother Voldemar Päts, head of the president's office Elmar Tambek and others were already at that time among the Nazi agents. The first four returned to Estonia in 1942, this time in the capacity of leading officials of the German occupation authorities.

What did the Estonian people think of all this? The soundest proof of the public opinion — documents of the intelligence forces.

Reports of the then Estonian intelligence agents leave no doubt as to the awareness of the people of the imminent danger. The general opinion was that if a war were to break out in Europe, Estonia would have no chance to escape being run over by the wheels of the German military machine. There was already talk in Western Europe about Estonia as a German protectorate. Berlin's indebtedness for the goods received from Estonia ran up into millions, but there was no talk of payment. In case of a world war, Germany would put an end to Estonia's trade with other countries. Various dates were predicted as to the time when Hitler's troops would enter Estonia: that very autumn, the next year, 1942, etc. The local Germans were saying that in no more than two years' time there would be no Estonia on the map of Europe, there

would be a German province instead. The local Germans were becoming more and more arrogant, but the government appeared to favour their subversive activities against the state. The "fifth column" of Nazi Germany in Estonia consisted, above all, of the army and state leaders themselves...

It seemed that the ruling circles were not trying to conceal their real aims any longer, all the more that in the West preparations were obviously made to form an anti-Soviet bloc.

It was high time for the Soviet government to take the necessary measures so as to ensure its safety.

The Soviet Union takes measures to safeguard its western border in the Baltic area.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are proposed to conclude a mutual assistance pact and to grant military bases to the Soviet Union for a rent, so as to organize defence in case of German aggression.

On August 23, 1939 the Soviet — German Non-Aggression Pact was signed. It became known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Although it did not guarantee peace in the East, it postponed Germany's attack on the Soviet Union. On September 1, Nazi Germany invaded Poland. When Hitler's army was approaching the Soviet border, the Red Army took under its protection the parts of the Ukraine and Byelorussia which had so far belonged to Poland. And on September 25 the Soviet Government made a proposal to the government of the Estonian Republic to conclude a mutual assistance pact, which would grant the Soviet Union the right to build, in Estonia, military fortifications against a possible German attack.

That meant that the Soviet Union had decided to prevent the ruling circles of Estonia from turning the country into a Nazi military base. A few months earlier, these circles had refused the joint offer of protection of England, France and the Soviet Union.

Panic broke out in the residence of the government in Tallinn. Its echoes even reached London, where the Estonian Ambassador

alerted the Foreign Office and insisted that Estonia had at all events to react to the offer of the mutual assistance pact with a war. On the same day, September 25, Chief of Intelligence R. Maasing, at the order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, met with representatives of the German army command in order to enquire whether Germany would follow suit if Estonia attacked the Soviet Union. The reply was negative — Germany was not yet ready for such a war. Attempts were also made to establish contact through the German ambassador in Tallinn. Berlin's reply was that Estonia had to make the decision alone as to whether she would accept the Soviet proposal or not. Germany would give her no armed support.

The reactions of the ruling circles concerning the Soviet proposal: Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Is the army ready to fight? Ministry of War: Will Germany support Estonia's military activities against the Soviet Union?

The President: Perhaps we should wait for the great German war against Russia?

The parliament's commissions did not sanction the conflict either. They admitted that the people would not fight against the Soviet Union. The Commander-in-Chief stated that there would be no help from abroad; without it a war would be absurd, neither would the international public understand the idea of a war in response to a proffered mutual assistance pact.

The Estonian Parliament: The people will not fight against the Soviet Union.

It was decided to accept the proposal of the Soviet Union. The mutual assistance pact was signed in Moscow on September 28, 1939. The ruling circles of Estonia found consolation in the thought that the pact would not last for long. Army Commander-in-Chief J. Laidoner is known to have said: "The great war is still ahead". Thus the pact was signed in the hope that it would soon be torn up.

The Estonian Government concluded a pact which they did not intend to keep. The British Chargé d' Affaires in Tallinn informed London in the autumn of 1939 that the Estonian Government was ready to violate the pact with the U.S.S.R.

If there was still something troubling the ruling circles, it was the clause that the parties to the pact should neither form alliances nor take part in *coalitions* against each other. That was not a mere warning. Violation of the obligation might have meant serious difficulties in the internal and foreign affairs of

the country that was following in the wake of German policy.

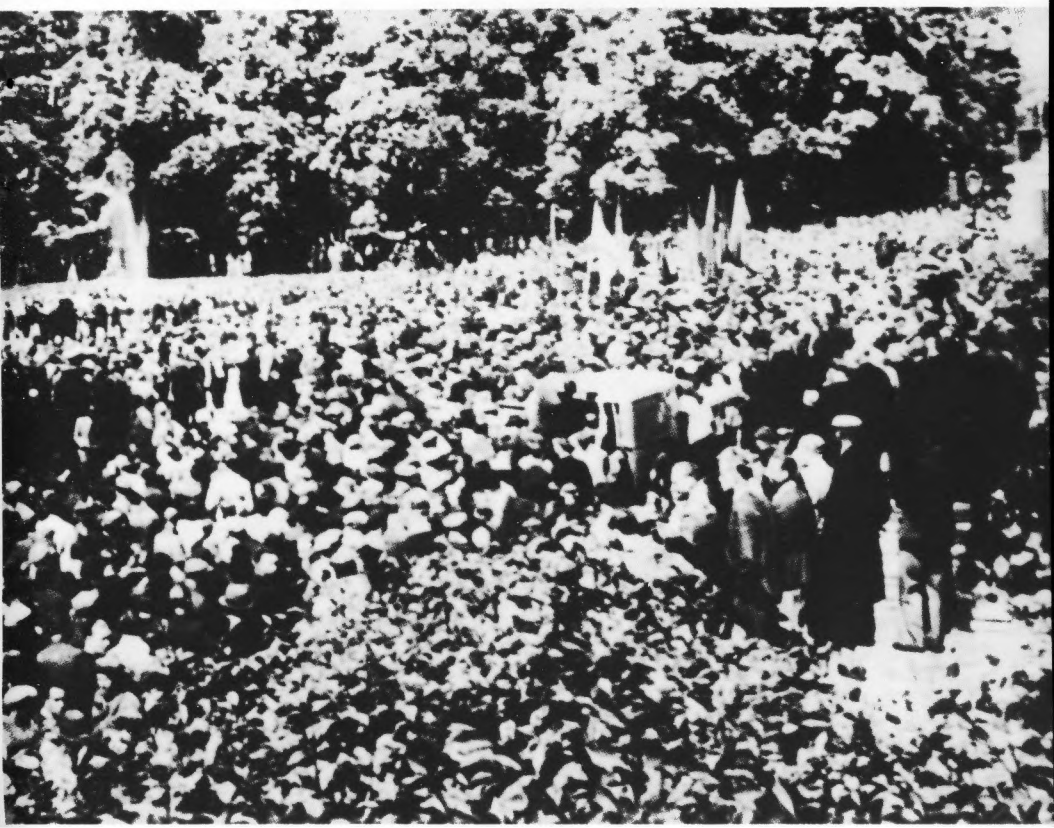
At the beginning of 1940, the political crisis increased rapidly in the country, the reason being the double-faced policy of the government concerning the pact between Estonia and the Soviet Union.

A conflict between the people and the government on those grounds broke out soon. The first impetus to it was given by the coming to light of the new plans of the Baltic Military Alliance. It was no longer possible to prove that, in view of the Estonian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact, the Baltic Military Alliance was not directed against the Soviet Union. Several new contacts with Nazi Germany did not remain secret, either. Incidentally, even after the conclusion of the pact between the Soviet Union and Estonia, those in power did not try to conceal their pro-German orientation, especially with regard to every possible help to Germany's military economy.

It is known that at the beginning of 1940, an Estonian visa was speedily demanded for German espionage agent Klee, who had to deliver to the Estonian government an urgent request from Commander-in-Chief of the German army Keitel to contact the German government. Chief of the political police H. Sooman admitted: "Klee announced that Germany would soon launch a war against the Soviet Union, as Hitler had repeatedly declared in party and military circles." Immediately upon the conclusion of the Soviet-Estonian pact, German espionage agent A. Cellarius arrived in Tallinn in order to establish an espionage network for the coming war. Soon after him the Estonian-born resident Baron Uexküll arrived, as well. The negotiations were naturally highly secret, nevertheless today we know the names of the agents recruited by the Nazis.

J. Uluots, a right-wing politician, Prime Minister in 1939—1940. During the fascist occupation (1941—1944) he served the Nazis. As a historian of law he propagated the superiority of the Germans and the theory of "Christian submission".

At that time there were probably very few political circles who realized how isolated the Estonian ruling clique was, and how shaky was the ground under their feet. We know of



On June 21, 1940, the decisive day in Tallinn. Thousands of people, who had gathered in the central square of the capital, started on their march to the president's palace to demand the formation of a new gowernment that would put an end to the dangerous pro-Nazi policy.

but one hint, and that was meant partly as a joke; yet it is worth mentioning. At a reception in the German embassy in the winter of 1939/40, there was a talk between Elmar Tambek. chief of the president's office, and the US chargé d'affaires Leonard. The American, who did not excel in tact, remarked that President K. Päts was an old man already, and the Estonians should look round for a new president. In the United States they were keep-

ing files on the prominent persons of all countries, but there was not much choice in Estonia . . .

From this we shall not draw the conclusion that at five minutes to midnight a plan to replace K. Päts by a pro-English or pro-American head of the state was under discussion somewhere. Besides, there "was not much choice".

The necessary choice was made by the people themselves.

By the beginning of 1940, Norway and Denmark (in April), Holland and Luxemburg (in May) had been conquered by Hitler's troops in addition to Poland. Then it was the turn of France. Paris fell on June 14. The fascists triumphed and did not deny any longer that their army would now be turned towards the East, once again.

The military activities of Nazi Germany in Western and Northern Europe in the spring of 1940 encouraged the Estonian ruling circles in their provocations against the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union demanded a guarantee for keeping the mutual assistance pact.

And the reactionary forces in the Baltic States were raising their heads. Militay demonstrations began here. Anti-Soviet conflicts were provoked (armed encounters on the Soviet border, secret meetings of the Baltic army commanders, military manoeuvres, etc.) in the hope that the German military forces would intervene at the critical moment, and that the long hoped-for "great war" would begin.

On June 16, 1939, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs notified the Estonian government that the latter was grossly violating the stipulations of the mutual assistance pact, and that in the face of the existing highly dangerous international situation it was impossible to put up with such an attitude; therefore Estonia was expected to guarantee honest observation of the pact. Yet there was no change in the attitude of the Estonian ruling circles.

And now something happened that Estonia's ruling circles had been afraid of all the time

they had bee in power: the wide masses of the population changed the course of the events. The warfare in Europe, one country after another falling prey to Nazi Germany, had raised the feeling of peril to the point where decisive action was called for. The government had lost its prestige as well as the people's confidence. The formation of a new government became topical — a people's government that would steer the country away from the course of the pro-German policy.

The Estonian Communist Party which had worked illegally throughout the bourgeois regime became the leader of the people's movement.

The popular movement was headed by Communists, similarly to other countries in Europe where it was necessary to fight against fascism. The state authorities in Estonia did not expect that after two decades of Communist-hunt the latter would still represent an actual political power. And yet on June 21, 1940, the Communist Party came unexpectedly forth with an appeal to the people, urging them to fight against fascism and the menace of war, and demanding the formation of an anti-fascist government that would honestly carry out the mutual assistance pact concluded with the Soviet Union.

June 21, 1940: all Estonia demands a people's government.

On the same day tens of thousands of people came out into the streets of Tallinn. Work was stopped everywhere. Before the government had any time to take measures, it found itself standing quite alone, eye to eye with the majority of the people who hated the government for its betrayal of the national interests.

The bourgeois government discovered that it was unable to suppress the people's uprising.

The former political figures of Estonia, who formed the Nazi "fifth column", now émigrés in the Western countries, have complained that their power had been unlawfully overthrown. But why did they let themselves be overthrown? They had the army which they had planned to send against the Soviet Union, together with the Nazi German army. They

The old power has quit the arena: members of the People's Defence Guard, representatives of the working class, taking over the residence of the government.

had the police, the intelligence service. They could have "called to order" the people violating "peace and order", as they had done dozens of times before. They could have used courts martial, as they had done during their twenty years in power.

But the government turned out to be completely bankrupt. The police dispersed. Members of the armed "Defence League" of the bourgeoisie hurried to hide their weapons. The army, after a short period of passive observation, sided with the people.

Late at night on June 21, a new government was formed who declared that they would fulfil the people's demands and resist all fascist provocations. President K. Päts confirmed the government in office in full conformity with the constitution. Thus the new

people's government was lawful, and the complaints of today's political émigrés about the "unlawfulness" of the collapse of their power do not hold water.

The general elections approved of the programmed demand of the Soviet Union: a firm union between Estonia and the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

In July of the same year new parliamentary elections were held. In the elections the anti-fascist United Front of the Working People won (cf. with People's Front in France in 1939/1940). On July 21, the establishment of Soviet power was proclaimed in Estonia, and on August 6, 1940, Estonia joined the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics on the basis of parity.

This marked the final crash of the Estonian pro-fascist political circles.

One of the most important results of the revolution of 1940 was that when a year later Nazi Germany launched a war against the Soviet Union, Estonians as a people of the latter country were among the United Nations who won the honourable victory over Hitler's Germany and its allies in 1945.

Those who have lost power become faithful Quislings to Hitler.

A mere handful of Estonian Quislings entered the service of Germany during the war. They are the ones who have now claims to the representation of the "continuative power" of the Estonian Republic in the West.

But what is the continuity in question? Not so long ago these gentlemen were on the payroll of Hitler's Germany.

SOME PRESENT-DAY ECHOES

More than thirty years have passed since the events described in the last chapter of our book. This is ample time to cast an objective eye at the past and evaluate developments not from the point of subjective experience but on the basis of authoritative documents. And yet not everybody has kept the latter in mind. Power-avid but powerless politicians do not like the evidence that corroborates the fact that the people have preferred a different road. They feel that they have been ignored, that they are the innocent victims of their political adversaries, and declare that they will not put up with the accomplished fact.

This is one of the main reasons why from time to time there is still talk about the "Baltic question" in the Western countries.

To give the most appropriate definition to the historical materials comprised in the present book, one could say that they serve as an illustration to this very "question".

The publishers want to stress that the "Baltic question", which is sometimes raised on the contemporary political arena, is not a discovery of the last decades, but a rather old historical issue. Of course, at various times it has been on the agenda for various reasons, but it has always been a question of the belonging of the Estonian and Latvian

areas to one major state or another, a question of controlling these areas, at least during the past five centuries. And the question has nearly always become topical at times when the privileges of the West — above all, of the invaders and the German upper strata — suffered in the Baltic area.

What, then, were the occasions, when the "Baltic question" was on the agenda in European history?

First of all when, in the middle of the 16th century, there were wars between Poland, Sweden and Russia on account of the Baltic area. The first two of these powers needed the territories for a war of conquest against Russia. Thus the Baltic area has been regarded as an anti-Russian bridgehead already since the Middle Ages, or rather since the 13th century, when the German military and clerical circles gained the upper hand here.

But the "Baltic question" has also been topical every time when the class privileges of the Baltic German aristocracy were attacked. For the last time the Baltic German landowners appealed to the "whole civilized world" at the beginning of the 1920s, when the bourgeois Estonian republic expropriated the barons' estates. That was also called a "barbaric act of violence" against German culture (!).

After the Russian socialist revolution and the establishment of the Soviet state, the "Baltic question" gained more impetus than ever before. Earlier history has witnessed how rivals fought each other because of the Baltic area. From now on the whole capitalist world joined in the attack against the Soviet Union in order to occupy the Baltic countries for good. If in 1917—1918 it was mainly the task of Germany, then in 1919 the Baltic area was an international military camp from where the campaigns to destroy the revolutionary power in Russia proceeded. Next, the

The end of fascism in Estonia. Former Deputy Foreign Minister Oskar Öpik (in plain clothes) before his escape, inspecting cannon-fodder on the way to the front.

"Baltic question" took the form of an anti-Soviet *cordon sanitaire*. It was also a struggle for the formation of the Baltic Alliance, for the maintenance of the cold war in this area. The "Baltic question" was kept on the agenda with the help of every possible rumour about "Soviet aggression", and each time the rumour denoted another provocation against the Soviet Union. Thus it lasted until the end of the 1930s, again assuming the form of German political and military expansion towards the end of that period. We know that it was favoured by the reactionary circles in western Europe, who dreamed of destroying the Soviet Union with the help of Nazi Germany.

The contemporary background of the "Baltic question" is connected with quite new phenomena. The heart of the matter is that the anti-Soviet forces do not command the Baltic *cordon sanitaire* any longer. The border of the socialist bloc does not lie along the river Narva, but over the Baltic Sea and

through Central Europe. Anti-communism has lost many of its strategic positions. Therefore the "Baltic question" figures . . . in the propaganda attacks launched against the so-called "Soviet imperialism."

Who is talking about "Soviet imperialism" in connection with the Baltic area? — The very circles who would like to have the Baltic area represent an anti-Soviet base after World War II, just as it was in 1918—1919 and during World War II. Those who are talking of "Soviet imperialism" would like history to repeat itself over and over again in the same old spirit of cold and hot war. And today's émigrés in the Western countries — the political circles deprived of power by the peoples of the Baltic area in 1940, as well as the Quislings, who entered the service of the German Nazis during World War II, are trying to hide behind the backs of these forces — the most conservative and reactionary forces of the West.

We know that among the Quislings there were many of those who fought against the Allied Powers in 1941—1945: SS legionaries, officers in the German Army, and others. Besides, there were also many of those who acted as henchmen of the occupation authorities, workers of the Gestapo, secret agents, policemen, members of the punitive forces and firing-parties, etc, etc. We know that in France, Holland, Belgium, Norway and other countries such people were tried as national traitors and war criminals. The Estonian Quislings and war criminals saved themselves by fleeing to neutral countries and Germany, where they became "war-time refugees".

Karl Selter, whose career as Minister for Foreign Affairs ended in 1939 (but who would have an equal right to the title of emissary of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs in

The Nazis and their henchmen escaping from Estonia left behind piles of corpses in concentration camps which were also called death-camps. In the picture: Klooga, one of the places of Nazi mass-murders in the vicinity of Tallinn.

the Government of the Estonian Republic) left Tallinn already at the beginning of 1940. He was appointed representative of Estonia at the League of Nations, where he, under orders from Berlin, helped to bury the collective security pact of Europe. After World War II he wrote in his book of memoirs in the German language "Zur Rechtslage der baltischen Staaten" that he had made the declaration of Estonia's refusal to join the pact of collective security at the wish of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hitler's Germany.

Oskar Öpik, "the second man" in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Karl Selter's time, was appointed Estonia's last Ambassador in Paris. He arrived there in May 1940, when Hitler's Germany invaded France. Öpik never did his duty as ambassador, he became representative of the Foreign Service of the German Gestapo, and was in contact with Berlin through Karl Selter in Switzerland. Nothing is known of the activities of the "diplomat" of the Estonian Republic until the year 1942, when he popped up in Estonia again, now in the capacity of the Director of Justice of the Estonian "Self-Government" during the Nazi occupation.

Thus the belonging of many an official of the Estonian Republic to the Nazi German agency became evident. Then the agency was called the "fifth column", upon which the Nazis relied in their conquests. Already in October 1939, chief of intelligence of the Estonian army Colonel R. Maasing disappeared from Tallinn and turned up among the staff of Admiral Canaris, Chief of the German Abwehr. His colleague Colonel V. Saarsen, chief of the 2nd department (counter-espionage) of the Estonian army, also became an officer in the Abwehr. Thus, at the beginning of 1939, Nazi Germany's agents were occupying leading positions in at least the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Army Headquarters as well as in Estonian economy. It is easy to see how much Estonia depended on Germany's dictate and to what an extent Germany controlled the Estonian army. We could name quite a number of other Estonian army and government leaders who became merited pensioners of the German Federal Republic after World War II, but that would not change the general picture.

In connection with all of this, it is worth quoting the memoirs of a former diplomat of

President K. Päts receives Commander of the German Army General Staff Franz Halder in the summer of 1939. Summit talks on military collaboration were held.

the Estonian Republic, Heinrich Laretei, which were published in Sweden. The author recalls his meeting with Estonia's Head of the State K. Päts early in the summer of 1940. The Head of the State told the ambassador that if there only were time to wait until September, then the German army would already be in Estonia. Consequently, the ruling circles of Estonia expected Germany to attack the Soviet Union already in 1940, and were convinced that Estonia would become Germany's ally, once again.

The fact is certainly proof of neither a "strict neutrality" nor a pursuit of collective security."

It was so evident that the Estonian ruling circles favoured Germany's aggression policy that the people were faced with the choice: whether to fall into the hands of Germany and become cannon-fodder in the war against the Soviet Union like in 1919, or to put an end to the pro-German policy and seek protection

from the Soviet Union. Besides, it was expected that if Germany were to start a war, the Soviet Union, England, France and probably also the U.S.A. would join forces in order to crush the German aggression. Thus it was necessary to overthrow the power of the ruling circles of the Estonian Republic so as to save the people from destruction.

Incidentally, the emigrated politicians assert that their siding with the Nazis in the war against the Allied Powers ought to be interpreted as a war of national independence. Here we have another parallel with the participation in the Entente's war of intervention against the Soviet Union in 1919. The fact that this time different states took part in the intervention does not change a very important conclusion: from the beginning to the end of their rule, the leading circles of the Estonian bourgeoisie were following in the wake of one Western power or another, whichever promised to be more profitable, every time allowing Estonia to be involved in new adventures directed against the Soviet Union.

This, as we have already mentioned, was the essence of the "Baltic question" in the period of time between the two world wars.

But history is liable to avoid repetition, since peoples learn from their past experience. No matter in what form the "Baltic question" is served today, its old expansionist spirit will not come to life again. And the question has actually never existed in any other form.

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